

# The Dark Side

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## **The Dark Side by FangirlingStrangerThings**

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**Summary:** El is a creature of the night, resisting the urge of human blood. That is until she sees Mike Wheeler. She's captivated by him and not only for the desirable blood he holds. Can she fight her primal instinct to bring him to the dark side? Or will she have to watch him live a long human life without her?

# 1. Primal Instincts

## The Dark Side

AN: Hello everyone and happy Spooky Month! I wasn't going to release this until closer to Halloween, but I'm impatient haha

This story came to life after I listened to the song '*The Dark Side*' by Alan Walker which I highly recommend. I have never written anything like this before, so I hope it goes down well!

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### Chapter 1: Primal Instincts

*Don't be afraid*

*The shadows know me*

*Let's leave the world behind*

*Take me through the night*

*Fall into the dark side*

*We don't need the light*

*We'll live on the dark side*

The first time she saw him he was slamming the front door shut of his family house and stomping down the drive, his jaw clenched in frustration and hurt, his heart pacing with adrenaline. El could hear it from the forest where she watched him, hidden in the shadows of the trees.

She could hear the pumping of his heart and the whoosh of blood that spread through his body. It made her mouth water as she dug her nails into the bark of the tree to try and feign off her hunger for him.

El had never experienced a lust like this before. Never truly giving into her primal instincts unlike the others. But that was before his

scent drew into her nostrils, dilating her eyes and making her thirsty for him and *only* him.

She closed her hazel eyes that were streaked with red from the moment of her transition and listened to his thoughts, using a combination of her new skills and the telekinetic powers she was born with.

His name was Michael Wheeler, although he preferred Mike. He was 21 like El had been when she was turned, forever frozen at this age. Her fingernails dug further into the bark of the tree as she continued to listen to Mike's thoughts and feel his emotions.

He was scared and angry. He had come home for the summer from college to find that his parents were fighting again, only this time it was volatile. His father had always ignored him his whole life, disappointed in his only son and forcing him to take an engineering programme in college when all Mike wanted to do was teach. And his mother? Well she was more concerned with her sordid affairs with much younger men to notice her son.

Mike had enough, packing his bag and leaving his family home and parents behind him as he headed to his friend Will's house. El couldn't help but smirk slightly to herself when she realised that the Will Mike was friends with, was El's same friend. A newly fledged vampire.

She found herself following him, her sense of smell and instinct taking over, leading El to her prey. She would have been surprised that Mike was walking in the dark to Will's house instead of taking his car if it wasn't for the fact that she could read his thoughts. She knew he wanted to blow off some steam, needed time to think *alone*.

The humanity inside of El flickered to life and she blinked, allowing her hold on Mike's thoughts to loosen. If he wanted to be alone with his thoughts, then she would allow it. It didn't mean she would stop following him though. He was alluring to her in a way she had never experienced before. She wanted him and as her skin tingled with desire, she wasn't sure if his blood was the *only* thing she wanted.

Mike was moving through the woods now, clearly knowing a short

cut to Will's house. El followed him, keeping her distance for her sake and his. His scent was overpowering her, and she honestly didn't know how she would react if she got any closer. But the decision was taken out of her control when Mike suddenly froze and turned around, their eyes immediately locking.

They both gasped in unison, El from the contact of his dark eyes, so captivating and magnetic to her soul. Mike gasping not only from the fact that his intuition that he was being followed was correct, but that he was being followed by the most beautiful and *ethereal* girl he had ever seen.

El could hear Mike's heart skip a beat as he stared at her and she practically felt the ghost movement of her own heart pounding with adrenaline and desire. Her mouth began to ache, her gums begging to release the sharp teeth that would sink straight into Mike's neck, his scent and pulse pounding against his skin making it *incredibly* difficult to resist him.

"A-Are you okay?" Mike stammered, the sound of his voice, so warm and soft it made El dizzy. "Are you lost?" He asked as he moved a step closer to her. His dark amber eyes flooding with concern as he took in how white her skin was.

His proximity was not helping her primal instincts as a hint of her sharp teeth crept through her gums as she stared at Mike, her eyes darkening. El tried to fight her desire, her *need* for him as she took a careful step back.

"I'm sorry," Mike gulped, his perfect eyes wide with embarrassment as he noticed her edging away from him. "I didn't mean to scare you."

El almost wanted to laugh at his words. *Him* scare *her*? Oh, if only he knew...

"You didn't scare me," she whispered softly, her words travelling along the slight breeze of the summer night to his ears, prickling his senses as he stared back at her with a growing intensity.

She knew he could feel it too. There was something between them, her whole body and her mind screamed it. *Soul mates*. In another life

he should have been hers and she should have been his. If she had never been turned, if she had never become a *vampire*.

Mike cleared his throat, El's gaze snapping to his Adam's apple which bobbed nervously. Her eyes grew darker and her teeth ached desperately, wanting his blood, wanting the softness of his warm flesh on her mouth, completely under her control. El's thirst was only growing, her body practically sweating with desire.

"Can I walk you home?" Mike croaked weakly, subconsciously tightening his grip on his back pack. "These woods aren't that safe. Especially at night."

El carefully bit down on her lower lip to stop herself from smiling too widely. She loved that he was trying to protect her despite the fact that she didn't need it. She could look after herself, even *before* she became a vampire.

"I was walking to my friend Will's house," El spoke innocently, her hazel eyes gentle but a sly smile threatened to curve her lips when Mike gaped at her in surprise, blinking in confusion.

"I'm going to Will's too," he said breathlessly, the low tone of his voice making El's ghostly heart beat pound. "I didn't know he knew someone *so...*" Mike coughed awkwardly, his pale cheeks blushing as he averted his gaze to the forest floor.

El smirked playfully, watching him intently for a moment. He was *beautiful*, especially when he was embarrassed, and his heart was jumping erratically in his chest. "So *what...*?" she asked innocently, fluttering her dark eyelashes slightly.

Mike gulped loudly as he looked back up at her, the hand that wasn't holding onto his bag went to the back of his neck, only exposing the skin more vividly to El. It made her want to sink her teeth immediately into his flesh, to *really* know what his blood tasted like. She clenched her fists to stop herself, wanting to know what his response to her question would be.

"I...um, I didn't know Will knew someone so *beautiful*."

El knew she shouldn't be surprised. After all she could hear the alluring racing of Mike's heart. But his words still sent a shot of electricity through her body as she stared back at him, her lips parting slightly in awe.

She was a *vampire*, a creature of the night, a predator. And yet this man, this living human was making her weak at the knees. He had his own control over her, something he didn't even realise yet.

El's natural primal instinct told her to fight back for dominance and she very carefully took a step closer to Mike, watching through darkening eyes as his nervous gaze danced over her features while his heart pounded. Those amber orbs captivated by her and the beat of that perfect heart was alluring El more than she could ever explain.

It would be so easy to have her way with him, right here in the shadowy woods where no one would hear him gasp. No one would see him succumb to her as she sunk her teeth into his neck. Her mouth watered but as El kept her focus on Mike's eyes she found herself able to fight the urge to take what she wanted from him.

Instead she smiled sweetly, her eyes hungry as her stare flickered between his untameable dark hair, his long nose, those sharp cheek bones, his tempting dark eyes and onto his lips. Those *lips*.

El licked her own dry lips as she stared at Mike's. They were almost red in contrast to his pale skin and plump, *filled* with blood. She managed to suppress the moan that wanted to leave her throat at the image of her sinking her teeth into his bottom lip. She could practically taste it on the tip of her tongue as her body ached with thirst.

With great difficulty El managed to remove her gaze from Mike's lips, slowly moving back up his perfect face until she met his eyes again. They captivated her in a different way to his mouth. His lips were a promise of desire and deadly hunger, but his *eyes*. El could have drowned in them, they were so soft, so *open* to her.

She took another step closer to Mike, his scent threatening to overpower her as she tried desperately to stay in control of the situation. El didn't take her eyes off the amber orbs as she moved

forward, hearing Mike's heart trying to jump out of his throat at her proximity.

"And I didn't know that Will knew someone so *handsome*..." she whispered the words, her breath swirling delicately in the cold air between them.

El didn't miss how Mike inhaled sharply at her words or how his eyes widened in shock. She smirked playfully at him, enjoying his body's reaction to her for a moment before speaking again. "Would you like to walk me to Will's house?" Her words were gentle and quiet, but she could tell they may as well have been screamed within the dense forest for the reaction they caused in Mike.

He nodded his head quickly, his eyes bright and alert. "Y-Yeah," he stammered, shuffling from one foot to the other. "I'd love to." A shy and sweet smile quirked on his beautiful lips and El felt herself swooning. He was so delicious.

She smiled back, a flirtatious grin that only heightened Mike's racing heart as they walked in the direction of Will's house. El could see his eyes darting from looking at her every few seconds to following the dark path in the woods.

"I'm Mike by the way," he finally blurted out, running his tongue over his lips, wetting them and making El's eyes darken with desire as she watched the glisten on his mouth for a moment.

She finally looked up at him, both of them walking side by side while she tried to tame her desires to sink her teeth into this gorgeous and captivating human being. A sly grin curved onto her lips as she stared at him, "you have a cute name. My name is El."

Mike blinked at her in surprise when she complimented his name, a red blush creeping into his cheeks, only reminding her of the perfect supply of blood under his pale skin.

"I've never been told my name is cute before," Mike chuckled nervously as he split his focus between staring at El and then hurriedly looked ahead of himself. "But you're name, that's pretty. *Really* pretty."



"Thank you," El answered with a wide smile that made Mike's heart jump. Her fingers itched to touch him, wanting the warmth of his skin, craving the taste of him; she could practically feel it on the tip of her tongue and it was making her delirious.

El had always managed to control her lust for human blood, being able to satisfy the need with animal blood instead. But Mike...he was different. He was adorable, cute and beautiful. And yet he was mysterious, addictive and more tantalising than he realised. If anything, he was more dangerous than El was.

"So," Mike coughed awkwardly, his clammy hands gripping onto his back pack. "Do you live in Hawkins? I'm pretty sure I've never seen you around before."

El managed to bite back her honest answer as she tried to think of what to say that would have at least a semblance of truth. "I have lived in Hawkins for a while...but I was home schooled and didn't really go into town much."

"Oh okay, cool." Mike smiled nervously. "I go to college in Chicago, I'm just home for the summer, but um..."

El's ears pricked at the stutter in Mike's breathing and she turned to look at him properly, curious if he would admit to the fact he was leaving his parents' house for good.

Mike ruffled his dark locks completely captivating El for a moment, her eyes glazing over with need and her ghost heart aching at how incredibly attracted she was to him.

"My parents are assholes," Mike finally said in a shaky laugh. El frowned, hearing his desperate thoughts, his need to make his parents proud, his longing to be loved and to belong. Her human empathy was back in full force, hitting her just as strong as it had before she became a vampire.

"Is that why you're going to Will's house?" El couldn't help but ask quietly even though she already knew his answer.

"Yeah," Mike nodded, giving her a small grateful smile for taking the

topic off his parents. "He's been my best friend forever. I'm actually surprised he never mentioned you." A strange look filtered into Mike's eyes and El almost snorted from the question she could see bursting into his thoughts.

He coughed awkwardly, averting his eyes to the forest floor as they got closer to the edge of the trees. "Are you Will's girlfriend?"

El was proud of herself for controlling her laughter and tried to look serious as she turned her hazel red eyes back onto Mike. "No. I don't have a boyfriend."

He looked back up at her so quickly she distinctively heard the crick in his neck from the strain. It only made her mouth water more at the thought of that gorgeous pulsing point at the base of his neck, god she wanted him. His blood, his body, *all* of him.

"You don't have a boyfriend?" Mike asked in disbelief, his voice thick and his eyes perplexed. "But you're so h – I mean..."

"*Hot?*" El couldn't help but tease him as they stopped walking, loving and hating how his cheeks filled with blood. Damn that gorgeous man.

"I didn't m-mean," Mike began to splutter, his heart beat so erratic it was kind of deafening El. "I meant...um...I well, okay...you're hot..."

He looked mortified and El couldn't help the giggle that escaped her body. Mike was surprised by her reaction and he blinked in confusion, looking at her in awe.

El stared at him, her pupils dilating and her nostrils flaring slightly as she took in his tall slim frame, his broad shoulders, the dip of his white t-shirt showing off delicious collarbones, his bobbing Adam's apple and then that *face*. Her own breathing was coming out ragged as her gums ached for release and her skin felt too tight to contain her.

She took a step closer to him, she couldn't help it. Mike's lips had parted slightly as he stared at her, she could tell he was attracted to her too. That his own primal instincts wanted her, that his soul was

calling for hers, that his heart *belonged* to her.

El's body was taking control as she tentatively reached out with her right hand, her fingers twitching with contact as her palm slowly brushed against Mike's cheek as she cupped his face.

She felt electricity spark from the tips of her fingers, rushing down her arm and straight into her chest. It was so powerful it might have even started her heart once more. El knew Mike felt it too, his breath catching in his throat as his dark amber eyes settled firmly on El's gaze, drawn in by her.

Her thumb carefully caressed along Mike's cheek bone, the man in question barely breathing as he stared at her in disbelief of her actions. When he finally stuttered out a breath, the warm air was pulled into El's lungs and her eyes immediately darkened.

Mike was captivated by the way her irises became flooded with red, his attraction and awe not leaving any room for logic.

Through El's lust and her urgent need for his blood, she could feel sharp fangs creeping out of her gums, ready and waiting to be released on him. Her eyes flickered to his long neck, to the fast beat of his pulse, the whoosh of blood racing through his veins.

El began to lean in, her eyes focused solely on Mike's neck as he panted in anticipation.

It was time. Time to make him hers. Time to feast on him; his blood, his body. His *life*.

His life.

El swallowed anxiously, her clouded thoughts clearing as she remembered how Mike wanted to be teacher in the future. How he was trying to make his parents proud. That he wanted to *belong*.

She couldn't do this to him. He was too *good*.

At the last moment El steered away from his neck and moved up to his ear instead, closing her dilated eyes to try and ground herself as she whispered, "I think you're hot too."

She ignored the way Mike's Adam's apple bounced with his sharp intake of breath and how his heart smacked against his ribcage. Instead El straightened up, giving Mike a coy smile as she started to walk again.

"Come on," she beckoned him, her eyelashes fluttering slightly in the moon light. "We're almost there."

Mike stayed rooted to the spot for a moment and El took advantage of the separation to inhale some desperately need air, the redness in her eyes subsiding slightly as she tried to control herself.

She planted a smile on her face as Mike hurried over to her, walking back into step beside her. Behind her smile was pain; not just at the fact that she was fighting her primal instincts. But because she *wanted* him, wanted him as more than a meal.

She couldn't have him though. He was a part of the light side, he was still trying to find where he belonged.

And who was El to control his destiny?

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AN: Okay I'm nervous! What did you guys think? Are you excited about this one? I'm currently thinking it's going to be 3 or 4 Chapters long.

Stay tuned for Chapter 2 when we'll meet some more vampires ;-) As always thank you so much reading!

## 2. Come Closer

The Dark Side

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Chapter 2: Come Closer

*I can feel her on my skin*

*I can taste her on my tongue*

*She's the sweetest taste of sin*

*The more I get the more I want*

*She wants to own me*

*Come closer*

*And I just can't break myself away*

*But I don't want to escape*

*I just can't stop*

The moment he saw her, Mike thought he had to be dreaming. There couldn't possibly be a woman alive that beautiful. She was ethereal with her soft features, her perfect lips, her porcelain white skin and those eyes that were completely captivating.

The moment their eyes had connected Mike felt like he had fallen under a spell, an ancient magic that he never wanted to end. There was just something about her, something about her deep red hazel eyes that scorched him, as if he was marked. As if he was hers, and they both knew it.

Mike had only just met her and yet it was like he had known her forever before this life, and through every life his soul had ever lived. He felt a connection with her, something that he didn't realise he had been searching for his entire life. And then suddenly she was there and life itself just made sense.

And through all the complexity of these emotions rushing around his body and the pounding of his heart, he couldn't quite believe his luck that he got to walk her to Will's, that he got to spend even more time with her. He couldn't help but ask if she was Will's girlfriend, it just felt so odd that he had known Will practically all his life and this mysterious girl had never come up.

Between her alluring personality, her striking looks and the way she seemed to be attracted to him too, Mike wondered if he was actually dreaming. This all couldn't be real, what could she see in *him*? She could have anyone, Mike was sure the whole human race would fall to her feet if she demanded it. And yet, here she was, in his personal space, whispering that she thought he was hot too and Mike was just about ready to faint he was so dizzy.

"Come on," she beckoned him, her eyelashes fluttering slightly in the moon light. "We're almost there."

Mike didn't even realise he was still frozen to the spot where she had left him, a hormonal mess, his chest heaving for air and his heart ready to jump out of his throat. He was so flustered it took him a moment before he could hurry back over to her. He was meant to be leading her safely to Will's house and yet he could barely look after himself in this moment.

He noticed how she was a lot tenser than she had been a few minutes ago, her shoulders looked tight, her jaw was clenched, and she was keeping her hands close to her sides, her finger nails leaving curved shapes in her palms. Mike frowned, worrying that he had made her feel uncomfortable. His cheeks filled with colour, a pink blush pounding against his cheek bones as he quietly tried clearing his throat and looked ahead, relieved when he saw Will's house come into view.

Through the confusion El had settled into his heart and mind, Mike couldn't help but be thankful that they had reached their destination. He honestly didn't know what he would have done if he was alone with her any longer. Mike knew that his friends classed him as brave, but when it came to this beautiful creature, he couldn't *breathe*. He could barely function around her and didn't know what he would say to her when he was so overwhelmed.

Hopefully Will could talk some sense into him, because Mike was desperate for a bit of advice. Should he try asking El on a date? Was it a little too soon? *She did say she thought I was hot too*, his mind reasoned, but then Mike would find himself shaking his incoherent thoughts, trying to remind himself that she could have just been trying to be polite.

Mike realised how long he had been quiet and instead of trying to be cool and comfortable with the silence, he found himself fumbling and awkward as he tried to find something to say. "So," he began in a croaky voice as he cleared his throat. He had El's attention again and found himself blushing for the millionth time that evening. He didn't notice how her eyes lingered on the redness of his face as he was too busy staring at the forest floor lamely.

"Um, Will's house...it's like there," Mike pointed to the house ahead of them, his face cringing the moment his words came out. *Of course she knows where Will's house is you mouthbreather! She was on her way there dumb ass.*

"S-Sorry," Mike exhaled in a shaky breath as he flickered his eyes quickly from El's extremely attractive and penetrating gaze before looking ahead to the house again. "I talk shit when I'm nervous," he explained before groaning at his words. If there was ever a moment to lose his voice, now would be the perfect time.

There was silence and Mike swallowed anxiously as he dared to look at El, his heart jumping in surprise when he realised she was already looking at him. Her eyes slowly, almost intimately dancing over his face and a small but knowing smirk on those perfect lips.

"Why are you nervous?" she whispered in a soft caress that Mike felt across his whole body like a physical touch. A shiver ran down his spine and he gulped audibly when their eyes locked, that stare making all his defences fall to the floor, like brick walls being smashed by a wrecking ball.

He knew he couldn't lie to her, her eyes almost seemed to pull out his soul from his body, like a magnet that he couldn't fight even if he wanted to. And Mike never wanted to fight it, he wanted to embrace the attraction, the desire that twisted hot and needy in his gut and

the race of his heart, every beat for *her*. She already had his heart and she had no idea.

Mike took a deep breath for courage and stopped walking, turning slightly to El as she halted too, watching him closely, analysing him in a way that he felt practically naked to her.

"I just...you make me feel nervous," Mike admitted, his body shaking slightly at the words that slipped off his tongue. His heart kept skipping a beat as he forced himself to look into her eyes again, to feel completely captured by her.

"You're the most beautiful woman I've ever spoken to. There is something...something about you, and I just *feel* like I already know you." Mike stammered before laughing nervously. "If that makes sense?"

El watched him closely, her entrancing eyes moving over his face seriously before a smile crept up her beautiful lips. He could see a hesitance in her eyes and his brow creased in concern wondering what she was going to do or say, before she took a very deliberate step towards him.

Mike's amber eyes widened, his heart racing with apprehension of what she would do. He had practically died when she touched his cheek and now he could hardly see straight from the dizzying affect her proximity caused within his body.

His lips involuntarily parted ever so slightly from nerves as he tried to suck in a breath of much needed air. Mike didn't miss how El's eyes fell to his lips, her pupils dilating at an alarming speed. He would have thought it was odd if it wasn't for his rapidly increasing body temperature, his heart smashing against his rib cage and his own eyes drawing completely into El's presence, ignoring everything else.

Mike could only stare into the depths of El's eyes as her finger tips brushed against his own, the simple movement feeling like the most scorching fire as his body lit up with electricity at their touch.

Her finger nails scrapped slowly and purposely across his fingers, her



cold palm brushing over the back of his clammy hand before she grasped him by the wrist and brought it up to her lips.

El's eyes were on Mike's and he couldn't look away, completely entranced by how she was staring back at him. *Hungry*.

He didn't know if it was an illusion from the shadows of the swaying trees or the moonlight, but something in her eyes seemed to change. The hazel seemed to get darker and it was exciting and yet terrifying all at once. Something deep inside Mike, his natural fight or flight instinct was whispering to him that something was off about this situation, that he should be walking away now. But he couldn't...he could never walk away from her. He belonged to her.

El didn't stop staring into his eyes, even when his wrist met her lips making Mike shiver in awe. How could the soft feel of her mouth against his bouncing pulse feel so incredible?

That natural built in protection to keep his body from harm was kicking in again, telling him to back off from her. He wouldn't, and he couldn't. He wanted her closer, he wanted to see what she would do next.

El closed her eyes, her nose brushed against his wrist as she breathed him in, her lips pressing against the artery where his pulse was racing like never before.

Mike watched with the most rapt attention as El hummed softly against his skin, working her jaw as if something was paining her and she was trying to contain it. Carefully and so very slowly, Mike felt the tip of her tongue brush over his raised artery and he gasped, his head woozy as desire swam into his eyes as he stared at her in awe.

Hearing his gasp, El opened her eyes, making Mike blink in confusion and fascination. Her eyes. They were now blood red and more intimidating and beautiful than anything Mike had *ever* seen.

Her gaze fell down to his wrist, and her eyes widened in surprise before she was carefully lowering his hand and releasing it, much to Mike's disappointment as he tried to get a grasp on his muddled thoughts and feelings.

El bit into her lower lip and looked down at the floor, heaving a long breath as if trying to control herself. From what, Mike didn't know. All he knew was that he didn't want her to stop whatever she was doing.

"Are you scared of me?" El finally asked in a whisper that seemed to move across the slight summer breeze, warming Mike's skin as she hesitantly met his eyes. He watched with rapid attentiveness as the hazel slowly returned to her mesmerising irises.

"No." Mike didn't even need to think about it, his heart answering with the simplest word to her question. He knew something was going on, but it was very hard to think clearly with El this close. All he knew was that he wasn't scared of her, whatever she was doing, he wanted it.

El watched him, her eyes almost sad as she sighed quietly and shook her head. "You should be scared of me," she murmured before continuing to walk, leaving Mike once again in a blur of confusion as he tried to break through the fog of her presence to really understand what was going on. What there was between them and what she *was*.

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El couldn't help but be incredibly angry with herself. She had known it was wrong to be near him, to draw him in like she did. But she couldn't help it. The kindest in his eyes, his nervous fumbling, his racing heart and his jumbled feelings were incredibly tantalising. He was an addiction, one El wanted to drown in.

His scent and the sound of that delicious blood racing through his body had been too much, she had almost faltered on the beliefs she made when she was turned into a vampire. She vowed never to drink human blood and yet she had pressed his trembling pulse to her lips, his skin so incredibly alluring and his blood right there for the taking. The worst part was that she could tell he would let her take whatever she wanted.

But El didn't just want his blood, she wanted *him*. She wanted him as her mate, she wanted him to be like her, to selfishly have him forever, again and again until the end of eternity.

It was a relief when they were finally walking up the porch steps to Will's house and Mike knocked on the door, his heart still bouncing with adrenaline and lust which was not helping El's resolve in the slightest.

When Will opened the door, his brown eyes widened in surprise at finding Mike and El together. They existed in two very different worlds, Mike was from Will's old life, a life he had enjoyed until the moment of his turning. And El was from Will's new life, finding him in the woods struggling with his addiction to blood. El befriended him, showing him that he didn't need to take his thirst out on humans.

"Will?" Mike gaped in surprise causing El to begrudgingly turn her gaze onto the reason she was questioning drinking human blood. Well, *one* human's blood. El penetrated Mike's thoughts and realised this was the first time Mike had seen Will since spring break, his first time seeing his best friend in his new form.

"Are you sick?" Mike asked in concern, his beautiful amber eyes immediately noticing the white pale skin. El felt her stomach twist when she realised that Mike was making the connection between her and Wil and their very similar complexions, his smart mind starting to carefully knit everything together.

Will looked slightly panicked seeing Mike but then his nose twitched, a slight cringe coming across him face making El want to smirk in amusement. Of course, while she was here desperately restraining herself from sinking her teeth into Mike's tender neck, Will was trying not to throw up at how repulsed he was by his best friend's scent.

"No, I'm fine," Will finally answered in a constricted voice before clearing his throat and opening the door a little wider. "Come on in," he said carefully smiling as his eyes flickered from Mike to El, giving her a questioning look. He wanted to know what exactly she was doing with Mike, but she could only shrug begrudgingly in response.

"So," Will coughed awkwardly as he closed the front door and watched Mike take a seat on the couch, lowering his back pack while El hesitated to move towards him. She settled for leaning against the opposite wall, which gave her some space from Mike and her desire

for him, but also allowed her to admire him from a distance.

"I see you've met El," Will added, his smile slightly strained as he once again glanced between El and his best friend.

"Yeah," Mike answered with a dopey smile before he cleared his throat while that gorgeous flush of blood filled his cheeks once more. El watched him, wanting to sigh dreamily at how captivated she was by him. Why did he just have to be so attractive? El lowered her gaze from the alluring man when she felt Will's judging eyes on her.

"We met in the woods," El muttered as she kept her eyes away from Mike and distracted herself by looking at the family photos hung on the wall. She smiled slightly as she saw photos of Joyce with Will and Jonathan. It stung her ghost heart to think of how complex life now was for the mother of two.

"We were both on our way to see you," Mike interjected, a smile on his face that didn't fool El. She could feel his thoughts pushing against her mind, desperate to be read. She knew he was feeling worried about how she seemed to be suddenly ignoring him, wondering if she was already regretting how close they had become. Of course, that wasn't it, that would never be it.

But under Will's concerned gaze, El knew that she was playing with fire. She couldn't bring Mike into the dark side that they had been forced to be a part of. It wasn't fair for her to want Mike, he was the most wonderful man and deserved a full life.

"Is everything okay?" Will asked his best friend as he sat down on the armchair, his pale brow creased with curiosity and unease at why Mike had come to his house so late into the night.

Mike's fake smile faltered, and he sighed heavily, El's insides clenching in pain. She couldn't see him like this; vulnerable, sad and hurt. It was like physical agony to see those stunning amber eyes fill with helplessness.

Mike rubbed at his tired forehead and shrugged, "my parents again," he mumbled quietly, his words being picked up easily by the two vampires with their heightened senses. He dropped his hands and

sighed heavily looking at Will, "I can't take their fighting anymore."

Will nodded in understanding, having seen the way Mike was used as a pawn between his parents for many years. All of the fighting had been to their son's detriment, making him feel unworthy and unwanted.

"Well you know you're welcome here anytime, my mom is on the night shift, but I know she wouldn't mind. You can take Jonathan's room if you want, he won't be back from New York until Thanksgiving."

Mike smiled and to see the tenderness sparkling in his eyes made El want to groan with desire. He was unbelievably beautiful in every way, his soul rich and pure. It was near impossible to resist him. The worst thing was, El didn't *want* to resist him.

"Thanks Will," Mike said in relief as some of the tension from his shoulders seemed to slip away. He relaxed slightly into the sofa and turned his eyes hesitantly onto El. She wanted to look away, but she couldn't, immediately pulled into his gaze. He gave her a warm but shy smile and she practically swooned, wondering if he was the one with all of the control. The idea was thrilling, hot but extremely worrying.

"So how do you two know each other?" Mike asked brightly, his sparkling eyes flickering between El and Will who both immediately tensed at the question.

"I met Will a month ago, in the woods." El was quick to explain, wanting to make sure that her new friend didn't cave in and blurt out the truth to Mike.

Instead Will grimaced into a smile and nodded, "yeah. El's been a really good friend to me, helped me with a few problems..."

"What problems?" Mike immediately responded, his brotherly concern once again flickering to life and making El sigh quietly, because damnit he was perfect, and she hated it. "You know I'm here for you, even when I'm in Chicago." Mike added with an encouraging smile.

Will laughed awkwardly, running a hand through his hair. "Thanks Mike, but, um...I don't think you could have helped with this problem." He muttered shuffling his feet nervously. After a moment of uncomfortable silence Will coughed to clear his throat and plastered a smile on his face, "anyone hungry?"

El didn't keep her eyes off Mike, her gaze absorbing everything about him and the way he stared back at her as she murmured, "starved."

"Right," Will said loudly, frowning as he watched the way Mike and El continued to gaze at each other, as if there was no one else in the entire world. "El, you wanna help me cook something?" When there was only silence and the couple continued to stare intensely at one another, Will sighed and shook her shoulder, "*El*, come help me."

El blinked breaking her connection with Mike knowing she would be blushing like crazy if she could. "S-Sure," she stuttered as she caught Will's disapproving eyes and hurried to the kitchen after him.

"Can I help?" Mike's sweet voice asked only to be responded to by a resounding, "*no*!" by both El and Will.

The moment Will closed the kitchen door he whirled around to look at El, his eyes alarmed and panicked. "What the *hell* are you thinking?!" he whispered harshly.

El felt her jaw tighten in embarrassment as she averted her eyes to the floor while she leaned back against a counter, her fingers clutched onto the surface edge. "I don't know what you're talking about..."

Will scoffed in indigitation and shook his head in frustration. "You know *exactly* what I'm talking about! He's my best friend El, he's a really good guy. He doesn't deserve this life. He doesn't deserve his choice to be taken just because you're *attracted* to him!"

El exhaled solemnly, her head hung in shame as she nodded woefully. "I know," she said in a whisper. "I'll try and stay away from him."

Will sighed loudly and walked over to El, leaning against the counter

next to her. "El you need to do more than *try*. You can't see him again. I know you like him and I can see he likes you too, but we both know why this can't happen. You and me...we didn't choose this life and we *never* would have chosen it. But it's happened, and I can't have this happen to Mike too."

Will's eyes were pleading as El slowly lifted her head and looked at him sadly. "He was meant to be my person Will, my soul mate," she said in a broken voice, her words a quivering mess as flashes of what kind of human life she could have had with Mike raced through her mind, causing icy tears to spill down her porcelain cheeks.

Will sighed tiredly and opened his arms up to El who immediately fell into his embrace, her hands clutching at his shirt while her friend wrapped his arms around her. "I know," he said sadly. "I don't need to be a vampire to see the attraction between you two."

"It's not fair," El sniffled, closing her eyes tight as more tears clung to her bottom lashes. "I *want* him Will. And not just for his blood, I want *him*. Forever."

Will nodded sympathetically, "I know you do. And I know it's going to be hard to resist him, but you need to remember that he deserves to *live*. Give him the choice you and me never had."

El exhaled a shaky breath, slowly lifting her head from Will's chest to look at him through pained eyes. "I know you're right. After tonight, I won't see him again."

Will smiled slightly, relief but also empathy flickering over his face. "Thank you," he replied softly, grateful for the sacrifice she was making to save his best friend's life. El gave him a weak smile in return, despite the pain that rippled throughout her body and the anger that soared like a burning phoenix in her heart, completely horrified at her decision.

"Right...do you want a steak?" Will asked with a slight grin as he pulled away from El and headed to the fridge.

She smirked in return and nodded, "raw I hope."

"It's the only way," Will chuckled in response.

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Mike sat across the dining room table from El and Will, a sandwich in front of him which lay untouched as he watched in confusion and slight amusement as El and Will tucked into raw steaks, the blood smearing around the plate in a way that made Mike's stomach turn.

"I always thought you liked your steak well done," Mike said in bemusement as he watched Will mope up the blood with a piece of the red meat. His best friend looked up at him, his eyes almost unnerved for a moment before he casually shrugged.

"Things change," he mumbled before taking another bite.

Figuring that Will wasn't going to expand on his answer, Mike hesitantly turned his dark eyes onto El who had been practically ignoring him since the moment they got to the Byers house. She had a piece of steak on the end of her fork and she was mindlessly moving it around her plate, her chin rested in her palm.

She was so beautiful, so mesmerising and she had no idea. Mike's heart picked up its pace once more and he flinched slightly in surprise when El snapped her eyes up to look at him, almost as if she could hear his heart starting to race. His cheeks immediately flushed and El's eyes focused on them for a moment, a darkness and desperation filling her gaze before she blinked and hurried to scoff down her raw steak.

"You must be hungry," Mike commented with a nervous laugh, wanting desperately to end this weird tension between them.

El sniffed out a breath from her nose, keeping her eyes on her plate she mumbled, "you have *no* idea..."

Mike watched as Will gave El a look, something in his gaze like a warning that made her sigh and take another bite out of her steak. He frowned wondering if maybe they had a disagreement and if that was the reason she was suddenly acting so distant.

Once their plates were clean, El was hurrying over to the front door,



moving so quickly she was almost a blur. "I'll see you soon Will," she said to their friend, her fingers already turning the handle on the door. She hesitated and then her eyes locked with Mike's, "it was nice to meet you," El whispered, her voice strained as if something was choking her throat.

Mike frowned, opening his mouth to ask where she was going and if she could stay for a bit longer. But before he could even breathe she was gone.

He stayed staring at the door in dismay, had she really gone? Just like that? Like a whisper in the wind. After everything that had happened between them, the gentle caress of her hand on his cheek, the way his heart had pounded for her, the way her lips on his wrist had made him yearn for *more*. And yet she hadn't even let him say goodbye.

Will cleared his throat reminding Mike he wasn't alone as he finally blinked and turned his head to look at his best friend. "Where did she go?" he asked perplexed, not even embarrassed by how needy he sounded for information on the mysterious El who had stolen his heart in one night.

"She's probably gone home; her dad has a cabin in the woods." Will explained nonchalantly as he started to turn the lights off. "It's late, we should probably get some sleep," he added, completely changing the subject as he started to walk down the hallway with Mike following him like a lost puppy.

"Will she be back? Does she work in town? Where in the woods does she live?" Mike asked quickly, his heart once again jumping into his throat as his body etched with panic at the thought of never seeing her again.

Will simply sighed and pushed open his bedroom door, "see you in the morning Mike. Good night."

Mike stayed in the corridor for a while, stood next to Jonathan's door but unable to move as he tried to filter through his complex thoughts. Begrudgingly he got ready for bed, borrowing some plaid pyjama pants of Jonathan's and pulling off his shirt before getting into the

cold bed.

He stared up at the ceiling, his heart racing, the thumping of his pulse pounding in his ears and the remnants of desire still stirring in his stomach. He couldn't stop thinking about her. The way her eyes spoke to him, the way they whispered "*you're mine. You belong to me,*" the feel of her lips and tongue against his skin, the way her sweet scent seemed to fill his body with an aching need and how much he *wanted* her. She was unlike any girl he had ever seen, she was sinful, desirable, beautiful and despite it all, there was something *more*. Like her soul was calling for his, he couldn't escape it and he didn't want it to ever stop.

He *needed* her, and he wasn't giving up.

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AN: First of all, I want to thank you all for the support you have given this story so far! I am really happy to be able to get a chapter out to you as my personal life has been pretty crazy and I was worried it would affect my writing.

I'm hoping it hasn't and that you have enjoyed this chapter, because I am SO excited for Chapter 3 and 4!

Thank you so much for reading and please let me know what you thought :-D

### 3. No Control

The Dark Side

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#### Chapter 3: No Control

*One little kiss can turn into a thousand*

*One little touch and I'm gone*

*Got no self-control*

*And I don't mean cigarettes and alcohol*

*Because when it comes to you I can't say no*

*I don't want a taste, I want it all*

It was one of those moments in Mike's life when he wondered how he had got there. It was Thursday night, two days before he was due to return to Hawkins for fall break and here he was, out in Chicago on a date.

"So..." Mike coughed awkwardly, sitting across from Alice Jones who was playing with her napkin in a way that kind of gritted on him. "Where are you from?"

"Boston. You?"

"Hawkins Indiana"

There was a long silence, Mike using the time to gulp down his beer, wishing he was anywhere but here and wishing that this girl was someone else. Someone with captivating hazel red eyes and an enticing smile.

It had been four months since the night Mike had met El. Four long months of thinking about her, dreaming about her and wishing he had been able to find her. For the whole summer had spent his days searching Mirkwood for this mysterious cabin to no avail.

When Mike tried to casually ask Will about El he was surprising tight lipped, finally blurting out that she had gone away for the summer. Mike had never before felt like he couldn't believe his best friend until that moment. It was just something about the way in which Will had averted his eyes and practically grimaced at the lie. All Mike could think was that El didn't *want* to see him.

He had returned to college, feeling as gloomy and miserable as he was when he left the campus for summer break. He didn't get enjoyment out of his classes, constantly wondering why the hell he was there. *Because mom and dad wanted you to do engineering.*

And now he found himself on a date, of course not his *own* doing, something that had been arranged by Will who was sick of him moping around. Will had a friend in Chicago called Alice who was a year younger than Mike and also went to the college. She was blonde, blue eyed and mainstream attractive. She was a science major, and according to Will she was smart, witty and sweet.

But she wasn't El.

All Mike could do was think about El, how she made him feel; how his heart felt like it might burst out of his chest when he looked at her, how a shiver would run down his spine when those eyes stared at him, as if staring straight into his soul. He never wanted to look away.

"Mike?" Alice was asking, waving a hand in front of his face.

"Hmm?" he answered quickly, blinking and clearing his throat before sitting more upright in his chair, not even realising he had been slouching and looking into the distance with a glazed look.

Alice looked frustrated with him and Mike could hardly blame her, it wasn't exactly like he was into this date. She exhaled sharply, "I was *saying* that Will told me you're on the engineering program?"

"Oh," Mike replied with lack of enthusiasm. "Yeah I am..."

Alice smiled and nodded her head, "that's good. Daddy is an engineer, he said only the smartest and most focused of men can become

engineers."

Mike couldn't help but frown, trying to bite his tongue as he realised how much Alice's father sounded like his own. He coughed awkwardly, "yeah...it's okay I guess," he said noncommittally as he shrugged his shoulders.

As Alice went onto a tangent about her rich parents and how she had met Will at summer school on an art program, Mike found himself daydreaming again. He thought about how El hadn't even flinched when he told Will that he needed to stay with him because his parents had been assholes. It was like she already knew what he was going to say, and yet when he looked at her, really stared into those beautiful hazel red eyes, he could see sympathy, *compassion*. She just understood him; his past, his pain and his need to please his parents and how it was slowly making him into someone he didn't recognise.

El was so different to any girl he had ever seen. She wasn't just beautiful on every level there could possibly be, but she was wise, she was magical, she was calling to him. Something within him was already hers and he felt the separation even now. He felt the empty void she had left in him. He needed her like he needed oxygen, he didn't feel alive without her.

"Mike? *Mike*," Alice huffed in annoyance as Mike once again jumped at being called away from his thoughts. He looked at the blonde in front of him and realised he couldn't keep up this pretence anymore, even if it was for his best friend.

"I'm sorry," Mike mumbled putting his napkin on the table and pushing his chair out. "I can't do this, I'm just...this isn't what I want." *You're not who I want.*

Alice looked mildly surprised, but then clenched her jaw and nodded sharply. "I can see that," she commented as she also pushed her chair out.

Mike rifled through his wallet, putting down the dollar bills on the table to cover the check. He at least could pay for Alice's meal after giving her such a wasted evening. They both put on their jackets, not talking for the moment, as they awkwardly left the restaurant

together.

Once hit by the dropping temperatures of the Chicago fall, Mike crossed his arms over his chest trying to feign off the bitter wind that was chopping through his dark hair. Alice had finished buttoning up her long dress coat and wrapped a scarf around her neck, all the while with a pinched look on her face.

"I *am* sorry," Mike blurted out feeling more uncomfortable than ever before.

Alice looked up at him in surprise, the irritation that had etched into her face slowly ebbing away as she appraised him for a moment. "Who is she?" she asked calmly, lifting her purse strap further up her shoulder.

Mike blinked in confusion, his brow lowering as he tried to comprehend what Alice had just said. "I'm sorry, what?"

Alice laughed, rolling her eyes and looking more approachable than she had all evening. "Who is the girl you are so clearly hung up over?"

Mike blushed as his heart raced, the image of El's teasing smile flashing into his mind, her perfect lips against his skin. He gulped and looked back down at Alice. "I met her over the summer, but um... well I don't think she's really that into me. I thought we had a connection, I *know* we did. But that night, she left kind of abruptly and I haven't seen her since."

Alice nodded understandingly but then shrugged her shoulders, "well if she's worth it, then don't give up searching for her."

Mike looked at Alice in surprise, taken aback by her response considering he had made her endure probably the worst date of her life. "Thank you," he responded smiling slightly, his chest feeling a little less tight and spurred on to find El. "Let me walk you home?"

Alice smiled and nodded, both of them walking and chatting now and again about their classes. Mike dropping her off outside of her dorm with a small wave and a repeated thank you, filled with gratitude.

It was getting closer to midnight by the time Mike made it back to his room in the shared house he lived in with four other engineering students. He shrugged off his cold jacket, hooking it on the back of the door before collapsing on his bed and reaching for the phone sat on the bedside table.

Mike dialled the number he knew by heart as he shuffled further up the pillow until his back was against the head board. There were three rings before Will picked up.

"Hey Mike," he answered casually.

Mike couldn't help but laugh as a grin curved his lips. "How did you know it was me?"

"I have my ways," Will said, Mike imagining him shrugging nonchalantly.

"What does your mom have caller display now?"

"Not quite..." Will mumbled before coughing. "So, how was the date? Did you like Alice?"

It was Mike's turn to feel uncomfortable as he nervously played with the hem of his button-down shirt. "It was...um, it was fine..."

"Mike," Will scolded in a long exhale, "friends don't lie."

"It was *awful* Will! What the hell were you thinking setting me and her up?!" Mike exploded, his frustration at the embarrassing and uncomfortable night rife in his blood. "I ended the date early."

Will huffed in exasperation, "please tell me you at least paid for her dinner and walked her home?"

"Of course I did!" Mike replied sharply, feeling slightly offended. There was a tense silence between the two men for a minute before Mike gave in, sighing heavily and rubbing tiredly at his brow. "I appreciate you thinking of me and arranging this date, but she wasn't right for me."

"Consider it the last date I ever set you up on," Will said playfully and

Mike smiled in relief that they were back on teasing grounds. He thought back to his evening, the reason why he was so distracted and decided to test the waters.

"Well don't say *ever*. I mean, I wouldn't mind if you set me up on a date with your friend *El* – "

"Mike," Will answered sharply, surprising him as his smile slipped off his face. "El is..." Mike listened as his best friend exhaled a deep breath and tried again. "El is different okay?"

"And that's *why* I like her," Mike couldn't help but pipe in, feeling frustrated that Will wasn't even giving him a *chance* to prove himself to El.

Will cleared his throat and tried again, "she's a very different person to who she used to be – "

"Well you all are!" Mike couldn't help but interrupt feeling exasperated by Will's weak argument. "You've changed Will, Dustin and Lucas too. You're all weirdly pale all the time and you just seem...I don't know..." Mike said shaking his head as he tried to think of a word that resembled how different his best friends were. They all seemed to like this whole raw steak thing making Mike feel like he'd missed out on some craze while he was away. Lucas went on and on about his new girlfriend Max who he had met in the spring. Not that Mike had the chance to meet her, anytime he brought it up the idea was quickly squashed.

"Trust me, if you meet Max, it'll be the last thing you *ever* do," Dustin had teased, getting a shove from both Will and Lucas as if they were all in on an inside secret that Mike wasn't. It was beyond frustrating.

"Look Mike I *know* I've changed," Will stressed bringing them back to their conversation. "I wish I hadn't, but I have. I hope someday I'll be able to tell you more about it and you'll understand. But I just want you to know, I've got your best interest at heart, okay?"

Mike couldn't help but frown deeply, trying to decipher Will's cryptic speech. "Are you...Will are you sick or something?" he asked as a wave of concern rippled through him. "Because you know you can



tell me, right?"

There was another pause and Will sighed heavily, "it's not that easy Mike. I will tell you at some point, I *promise*. Just...just give me time to try and figure it all out."

"Okay," Mike mumbled, worry still evident in his eyes which he was thankful Will couldn't see right now. The boys moved onto more neutral territory, what campaign Mike was planning to create for his week back in Hawkins and how Joyce and Jonathan were getting on.

The room was filled with shadows by the time Mike hung up the phone, his muscles aching and tired from the long day. He shuffled back down the bed, his head hitting the pillow with a sigh of relief.

Mike looked out of the window at the moon, it wasn't full yet, but it still shone beautifully. His eyes flickered over the pearly white colour as his thoughts once more turned to El.

He could see her; the moment he had turned around in the woods that night and she had been stood there, just as startled as he was. Her skin so pure with a similar effervescent tone as the moon. Her enticing eyes and their ability to change shade as they drew him in, stronger than any magnet. And those *lips*, that mouth against his pulse point, his skin shivering and jumping at her touch, at the smoothness of her flesh against his, the way she had breathed him in and almost *tasted* him.

Mike shuffled, closing his heavy eyes as desire stirred low in his gut. For a while that was all he could think about, the blood rushing from his head as he succumbed to his own burning passion for El, her face in his mind as he brought himself to release.

And later when he finally slept, beads of sweat had erupted onto his brow, his eyelids twitching and his head thrashing now and again against his pillow as he dreamt of her touch, her lips, her mouth on his neck, her teeth piercing his skin...

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The autumnal leaves crunched under El's white converse trainers as she moved slowly through the forest, her hands wrapped around the

legs of the deer she had just killed as she pulled it along the earthy ground. This type of hunger, the predatory need to thirst for blood was something El still struggled to get used to.

And while Max insisted that it was in their nature to kill, El would always shed a tear after she had broken the neck of the deer with her powers, hoping it was quick and that the animal hadn't suffered.

El was thankful for the peace and quiet of the Denfield woods that surrounded the cabin where she lived with Dustin, Lucas and Max. It belonged to Hopper, her guardian who had extended the building to house the vampires, wanting them away from the temptation of human blood.

Hopper, Hawkins Chief of Police was human, however Dustin, Lucas and even Max didn't dare to turn him or feast from his blood. El would have killed them first. She loved Hopper, he was the only true father she had ever known and she wouldn't allow anything bad to happen to him. Will was just as protective over Joyce and Jonathan too.

Still Hopper always took precautions when he visited the cabin, like wearing a necklace of garlic and a cross that the vampire party would roll their eyes over, smirking at his attempts to keep them at bay. They all liked Hopper though and wouldn't subject him to this fate.

El was just approaching the cabin when the door swung open, Dustin was stood in the doorway, his smile wide and excited as his eyes flickered to the deer. "Yes," he exhaled happily, as he hurried down the creaking porch steps to help El with the animal. "I *knew* I could smell deer."

El rolled her eyes amusedly and smiled warmly at Dustin. "You're *always* thinking with your stomach."

Vampire clans were like families, and El saw Dustin and Will as brothers. Lucas and Max were slightly different, drinking each other's blood in a ritual of marking one another as mates. The idea of having a mate had never meant anything to El until the night she met Mike.

However she tried to obey Will's wishes of staying away from Mike, it

didn't stop her dreaming of him, thinking of him almost every minute since the moment she had parted from him.

Her dreams were haunted with rich amber eyes, fumbling thoughts and a pounding heart with a whoosh of blood so tantalising that she would wake up in a sweat, her fangs pronounced and ready. In those first seconds of consciousness she could practically hear her ghost heart racing for him.

El tried to shake away her thoughts as she concentrated on hauling the poor animal's carcass into the cabin with Dustin whose mouth was practically watering. As per Hopper's wishes, they hunt human's, instead feasting on animals from the forest and getting the occasional donated blood package if they were well behaved.

"Where are Lucas and Max?" El asked Dustin as they dropped the animal on the long kitchen table, its heavy body making a clunking noise as it hit the oak wood.

Dustin snorted and pointed towards a side door that housed the newly built corridor that led off to the bedrooms. "Where do you think?" he teased making El shudder playfully.

"Are you going to ask Will if he wants some of this?" Dustin questioned El while keeping his wide eyes on the large animal, licking his lips with hunger.

El nodded and walked over to the kitchen window, "yeah I was just about to call him." She looked out for a moment at the woods, closing her eyes and focusing on Will's location, his thoughts murky in her mind but clear enough to reach out to him.

"We've got deer if you want any," she spoke into his thoughts, concentrating hard as she felt his presence get closer. El smiled and opened her eyes turning to Dustin, "he's on his way," she announced moving back to the table.

"We don't have to wait for him, right?" Dustin whined, his irises having already turned red as he looked at the large creature in front of them.

El sighed in exasperation but smiled despite herself, "go ahead, but make sure you leave enough for everyone else," she told him sternly.

"Yes *mom*," Dustin teased before leaning over the animal and sinking his teeth in. El joined, going for the neck, closing her eyes and feeling an instant hit of gratification that eased some of her hunger. It was a crutch at best, helping her to deal with the initial pang of blood lust but not going deep enough to fix the real problem.

Her body thirsted for something now, *someone*.

And the more she knew she couldn't have him, the more she desperately craved him. With her eyes closed and her teeth sinking further into the animal she imagined it was Mike's neck and felt her irises turning blindingly red.

His blood would be warmer, his scent would overpower her, and his gasps and cries would make her want more and more of him, taking everything she wanted until he was like her. Until they were one; the same beings, the same curse, *mates*.

"Geez El leave some for the rest of us," Lucas's voice teased, bringing El out of her reverie as she opened her eyes in a flash realising she had been feasting at the poor creature's neck. Her jaw slackened, and she pulled away from the deer, blood dripping down the sides of her mouth.

Dustin was still enjoying his own bite, but Lucas and Max had stepped out of the bedroom and were now watching El with enjoyment. She noticed the bites at their own necks and wrists, clearly they had been entertaining themselves. El couldn't help the pang of jealousy that she couldn't do something like that with Mike.

"Lucas you shouldn't have interrupted her," Max reprimanded her mate, her hand stroking up his muscular arm as she gave him a flirty smile before turning her blue red eyes back onto the other female. "It was hot."

El rolled her eyes as Max walked over to her with purpose. She patiently watched as the red head's index finger followed the blood trail on El's lip down to her chin, before lifting her finger to her

mouth and sucking the blood of it. Max smiled devilishly and then turned her attention to the carcass. "Very tasty," she commented.

Max was the reason they were all here, that they all had this life. She was from California where she had been bitten. After seeking revenge on her abusive step father and step brother, she fled the state, moving through different areas, not sure what she was seeking until she found Lucas.

He was quick to succumb to her, feeling their mutual attraction. Max had never had to contain her blood lust before and soon turned Dustin too. El and Will had been next, Hopper and Joyce who were becoming more than friends had finally introduced their children to each other in the spring of that year.

It was when they were in Mirkwood, Will showing El Castle Byers when Max had appeared with Dustin and Lucas, hungry and attracted to the scent of El and Will's blood. She hadn't been able to control herself, Lucas and Dustin too wrapped up in their battling emotions to do anything about it.

And while Max only mated with Lucas, she was very much captivated by her fellow vampires. She was attracted to El's scent, she liked to keep Dustin close by and even Will wasn't immune from her playfully nibbling at his neck.

Now Lucas was sat at the kitchen table, Max draped on his lap as they shared a limb of the deer, taking it in turns to have a bite before sharing a fervent kiss. El couldn't help but watch them for a while, imagining in her mind's eye that it was her and Mike. That he was like her, that El had turned him into a monster too.

She was distracted from the scene when the front door swung open and Will walked in, a weary smile on his face as he looked between his friends and the meal waiting for him. "Thank god," he breathed out as a way of greeting as Dustin, Lucas and Max looked up at him. "I was starving, and steak does always cut it you know."

"If we left Hawkins, you could have a *real* taste of human blood," Max goaded with a smirk while El shook her head, leaning against the kitchen counter as she frowned at the red head.

"No Max, you know what my dad said," El said sternly, her lips tight in a serious line.

"Yeah, yeah," Max sighed as she took another bite out of the deer. "No killing humans means no stake to my heart, no decapitating me and burning me with fire, blah, blah, blah"

El couldn't help but smile from how dramatic Max could be, but she was kind of along the right lines of what Hopper would be forced to do to them if they went around killing people just for blood thirst.

"Come on El, get your fill," Dustin called to her as he pointed to the animal. She sighed, pushing away from the counter and joining her friends in devouring the carcass.

Afterwards El found herself lying on the rug in the living room next to Will, both of their legs propped up on the couch as they stared at the drab ceiling. Max, Lucas and Dustin had gone for a nap together, all of them feeling drowsy after such a good meal.

Will and El were quiet for some time, both of them just enjoying each other's presence as they breathed in and out slowly, filling their frozen lungs with air.

"Are you looking forward to Halloween?" Will asked with a yawn as he turned his head to look at El. She continued to look up at the ceiling and shrugged.

"I guess," she mumbled quietly.

Halloween was only three days away and Max had told them all they would be going to Indianapolis to an underground private club owned and run by vampires. El had always loved music in her human life but had been too terrified to go anywhere that there could be a hoard of humans. This club sounded like somewhere she could let loose, be herself in a room full of others like her.

Will cleared his throat and El's hazel red eyes immediately landed on him, sensing his sudden anxiety. "What is it?" she frowned.

He bit his lip and sighed, keeping his eyes on hers. "I need to ask you another favour..."

El wanted to scoff, seeing as the last 'favour' she had done for Will was staying away from Mike, and it was by far the most *painful* thing she had ever experienced. She didn't speak, waiting for him to tell her what was making him feel so uncomfortable.

"Mike is coming back tomorrow for fall break," Will blurted out while El's ghost heart almost burst into life. She tried not to show the shock on her face, but it was evident. "And...and he still hasn't forgotten about you El. I'm worried for him, I think he's still going to try and find you."

El was torn between feeling jubilant and happy that Mike hadn't been able to stop thinking about her either, but equally terrified at the thought of seeing him. She had no self-control around him, she couldn't stop whatever might happen.

"What do you want me to do?" El croaked out, swallowing the nervous lump in her throat as she stared at Will.

Will looked terribly guilty as he sighed and ran a hand through his short brown hair. "I think...you need to tell him that you're not interested in him like that. Let him down gently but tell him that you and him can't work out. Maybe he'll believe it if it comes from you."

El found a fire of anger starting to fill her chest, flames of frustration flicking against her skin. "And do you think that will be easy for me?" she asked Will through clenched teeth. "To pretend that I don't care about him? To pretend I don't *love* him?"

Will's eyes widened in surprise at her words and his mouth gaped open slightly. "You're in love with him?" he whispered.

El blinked, only now realising the words that had spilled from her tongue without her consent. She looked back to the ceiling, picturing his smile, his eyes and that soul, beautiful, pure and adoring. "Yes," she breathed, "I love him."

Will groaned, covering his face with palms. "El, this is so messed up."

"Don't I know it," El said with a humourless laugh. She sighed heavily, her chest practically aching as the words she knew she had

to say tried to stay constrained. "I...I will t-tell him I'm not...*interested* in him. That I don't *like* him..."

There was an awkward silence as Will sadly nodded his head and then scooted closer to El as she rested her temple against his shoulder. "I just want him to be safe El," Will said in a murmur as he stared up at the ceiling. "He's like a brother to me and was my first friend. I want him to live a long life and not be cursed to this existence."

El clenched her jaw, narrowing her eyes to try and stop the tears that brimmed in her lower lashes desperate to fall. "I know," she exhaled understanding what was best for Mike too, having to accept that it wasn't her.

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Hawkins was beautiful in fall Mike thought as he drove through the main town, his eyes glancing at familiar sights, like the arcade, the Hawk and Melvald's. The trees were picturesque, especially as he got closer to the Byers house where the edge of Mirkwood looked like a post card for fall. Burnt orange, vibrant green, deep red and rich brown filled Mike's eyesight, the speed of the car making fallen leaves swirl around in circular patterns as he drove.

When Mike pulled up outside of the Byers house he wasn't surprised to see that Joyce's car was gone, no doubt she was in the middle of her shift. Mike couldn't help but shake his head in amazement as he compared Joyce to his own mother. He hadn't heard off her or his father after the night he stormed out of the house at the being of summer. They weren't worried about his whereabouts, more concerned with arguing and bitter over the lives they thought they should have had. Probably one that didn't include Mike. Well he was done with it, and he was done with *them*.

He got out of the car, grabbing his duffel bag from the back seat and locking the vehicle as he made his way up to the house that had always been more of a home to him than his actual home. Joyce had been more than happy to have him for fall break, insisting there would be room for him even at Thanksgiving when Jonathan would be back from New York.



Mike was just making his way up the short steps towards the front door when it opened, Will stood there with a warm smile on his face that Mike mirrored. "I thought you were never going to get here," Will laughed as the two best friends hugged.

Mike shivered at how cold Will felt but didn't comment on it, knowing he didn't get any answer when he raised this concern after they had embraced before he left for college at the end of summer break.

"Sorry, I was just taking a drive round town, looking at all the old sights."

"Did you miss it?" Will replied as they broke their hug and he stepped back to let Mike move into the house with his heavy bag.

"Kind of," Mike smiled bashfully as he put his duffel bag down on the couch and sat next to it. "Like I don't miss my parents or anything, they can go to hell," he said darkly, his brow furrowing for a moment before he tried to clear the expression. "But I missed you guys and just Hawkins in general."

He didn't dare tell Will that the thing he missed the most was El. That he thought about her every waking moment and even in his dreams she seemed to be a constant presence, taunting him with what he wanted so badly. She was there, but always out of his reach.

"Well we all missed you too," Will replied, a small smile on his lips but a strange look in his eyes that made Mike frown before he dropped the subject and took off his jacket.

"Are you hungry? Mom left you sandwiches and stuff, it's covered up obviously in case you don't want it yet."

"She's too good to me," Mike grinned, and Will laughed taking a seat on the couch too and turning on the television. They settled on cartoons while Mike scoffed down his sandwiches. He noticed that Will was getting antsy, his eyes almost glued to the front door before hurriedly looking back at the television screen when he realised his best friend was watching him.

"You okay Will?" Mike asked carefully, while Will blinked, trying to clear some of the guilt out of his eyes as he nodded a little too enthusiastically.

"Y-Yeah I'm great. Um, why do you ask?"

Mike's eyebrows rose in surprise and he wanted to laugh, it couldn't be more obvious that Will had something on his mind, he was a terrible liar. "Will you know friends don't –"

There was a soft knock at the front door and Will's head immediately whipped towards it. He stumbled to his feet and let out a nervous laugh, "I wonder who that could be..."

Mike watched him in concern, his brow lowering in perplexity before Will yanked the front door open. And then everything stopped.

Mike's heart screeched to a halt, his breath caught in his throat and his eyes widened in less than a second as El walked into the living room.

He didn't notice Will's hesitant glance between the pair before he closed the front door behind her. All Mike could see was El.

*El.*

After four months of not seeing her Mike's mind and body felt like it might implode. He didn't realise his jaw was slack as he took in her high waisted black skinny jeans that showed over her svelte curves. He gulped as his eyes trailed up her body, his throat dry at the way her black sweater clung to her waist and chest.

Mike dragged his gaze up to El's face, immediately drawn in by her gaze. The whole world might as well have broken away when he looked into those eyes. They glowered with fire, staring into his soul and making him forget his own name.

Will cleared his throat loudly and Mike jumped having completely forgotten that they weren't alone. He blinked multiple times and felt a deep crimson blush flushing his cheeks. Mike watched as El's alluring eyes moved down his cheek bones as if following the trail of his blush, which only made it worse.

"Hey El," Will said cheerfully, a little too overzealous once more, but this time Mike was too distracted to really notice. "What are you doing here?"

El took a deep breath, her finger nails curling into the palms of her hands as she tore her gaze from Mike and looked at Will. They shared a glance, something in their eyes intriguing Mike who was still staring at El with his mouth open.

"It's a lovely day," El said with a breezy smile that didn't reach her eyes. "I thought we could go for a walk?"

"Oh," Will commented, his gaze shooting between El and Mike. "Well I was actually going to do some drawing..."

Mike frowned wondering why Will hadn't mentioned this earlier. He hated the idea of El coming all this way to just leave again. He cleared his throat, trying desperately to allow words to leave his mouth but Will beat him to the punch.

"Hey, I've got an idea! Mike, why don't you go with El?" Will said in a strained voice, his smile looking almost painful as he looked between the pair. El didn't seem surprised by the offer but Mike's heart had jumped up so high it was practically in his mouth.

"Um," Mike croaked willing himself to speak and stop feeling so tongue tied in front of El. "Y-Yeah...I mean....t-that would be...uh...cool."

El exhaled a deeply breath, looking down at the worn carpet as she nodded her head. "Okay," she said without a smile. "Let's go."

Before he could even blink El was heading towards the door, her and Will sharing one more sombre look as Mike hurried to put his jacket back on, not stupid enough to waste the opportunity that he had been granted. He couldn't stop the foolish grin and the hopeful thumbs up he gave Will before scrambling after El who was already across the front yard.

---

*I can't do this. I can't do this. I can't do this.* El's thoughts were

practically screaming as she made her way into the woods, her fists clenched and her chest tight as she tried desperately to control herself in front of Mike.

She knew it was going to be hard to see him again, but she had never imagined it would be *this* hard. The moment her gaze had locked with his she felt like she was done for. Those beautiful amber orbs of his captivating her in a way nothing else ever had. His scent hitting her nostrils and boiling her blood, her tongue desperate to taste him and her fangs aching for release.

El had formulated the plan with Will as they lay together staring at the ceiling and decided that she would go for a walk with Mike and plainly tell him that there was nothing between them. From the moment the plan had been formed, El knew it would kill her.

She heard Mike's hurried footsteps, his sneakers crunching the multicoloured leaves as he finally fell into step with her. El couldn't decide what was worse, his racing heart or his excited thoughts, his mind telling him to play it cool. She immediately closed off his thoughts, finding it too painful to hear what he was thinking in this moment.

"So...um, how have you been?" Mike asked, his nervous gulp practically audible as he stuffed his fidgeting hands into his dark blue jeans. "I haven't seen you since – "

"The beginning of summer," El finished for him, keeping her eyes ahead of her as she led them into Mirkwood.

"Right," Mike mumbled, the tension building between them as they continued to walk. The only sound being of crunching leaves and bird song aiding their journey.

El didn't know why she didn't just stop them now, simply turn to him and break both of their hearts. Surely getting it over with quickly would be better in the long run? But every time she opened her mouth to utter the words, her jaw snapped shut as if her body was trying to stop her.

"Did you have a nice summer?" Mike asked, his heart pounding away

and his pulse throbbing in his neck, making El want to sigh heavily because her self-control was at a bare minimum with him this close.

"Yes, it was fine..." El said tensely, clearing her throat and digging her nails further into her palms as she tried to pretend that the person she wanted most in the world, the person who would *make* her world wasn't stood right next to her. Eager and willing.

"Did you go away?" Mike pressed on and El couldn't help but admire his determination. "I um, didn't see you around so..."

"Were you looking for me?" El asked, mentally kicking herself for luring them both into a trap. That flirtatious and teasing trap that she would struggle to get back out of once she was in it.

Mike stopped walking, even surprising El who had to stagger to a halt as she begrudgingly turned to look at him. Oh *god* those eyes were just *devastating*, especially when they were filled with such hope and courage.

Mike inhaled and exhaled a shaky breath and looked at her with a determined gaze, like he was daring himself to say what he felt. "Yes," he said in a nervous murmur surprising them both with his honesty.

El took a step closer, her eyes dancing over his face, watching the pretty blush, her mouth watering at how the blood rushed to the surface of his smooth skin. "Why?" she whispered, her skin feeling hypersensitive to every trembling breath Mike exhaled. "Why were you searching for me?"

Mike gulped, keeping his eyes locked onto hers, both of them unconsciously moving closer together. "Because," he paused, his chest heaving with nerves as he swallowed and tried again although he didn't need to. El had known from the moment she met him, from the call to her soul, from the pounding of his heart and the fluttering in his stomach.

"Because I'm in love with you."

Hearing the truth slip from Mike's lips made El's ghostly heart sing

with joy as a smile curved on her face, her eyes sparkling and her hands itching to touch him, her lips begging to press against his own. For the moment she felt normal, she felt like any girl should feel when the man they loved returned that overwhelming and overpowering feeling. This should be the moment she leaned in and told him she loved him too.

But then she remembered what she was. A vampire, a *monster*.

"No," El said firmly, her heart breaking as she took a step back from Mike, then moment even more painful as she heard the aching lurch of Mike's own heart in his chest. He looked at her in confusion and blinked.

"El, I'm sorry if it's too soon to be telling you this, but I...I had to tell you. Every time I *look* at you, I just..."

"You *what*?" El said sharply, feeling tears filling her hazel red eyes as she looked into the deep amber beauties that were crushed by her reaction.

"I fall in love with you even more." Mike admitted, running a hand through his hair as he took a step closer to El while she tried to back up once again. He looked hurt, sad and frustrated. Because while he might not have the abilities she did, he knew love and he knew how she felt without her having to utter a word.

"I *know* you feel the same," Mike said almost desperately as his eyes searched the depths of hers, seeing the truth in her gaze that she couldn't hide.

El shook her head insistently, "no...no I don't." She tried to say calmly while her voice quaked as she took another step away from Mike, not even flinching when her back hit the tree behind her.

"Why are you lying?" Mike asked helplessly, his face etched with pain as he anxiously attempted to understand El's thought process while she tried to avoid his gaze. "Are you scared?" he whispered tenderly making her flinch and look back up at him, meeting his powerful gaze.

It should have been so simple, two souls having found their mate, their life partner. El felt anger building up in her chest as she tried to comprehend why they had been so hard done by, why they were forbidden to be together.

"Yes I *am* scared," El snapped, her own chest heaving with fury as she stared up at Mike who had hesitantly moved closer, his eyes imploring her. "I'm *scared* of hurting *you* Mike. You have *no* idea what I could do to you, I'm a monster. I will *ruin* you."

The water that had pooled in her eyes spilled over, delicately running down her face as El shook and looked up at Mike. His eyes were tender and soft as he listened to her every word, his lips slightly parted in awe.

"You're so *good* Mike. You're so pure and beautiful and you *don't* deserve this life. You must have known there wasn't something right about me. My eyes, how I act around you. I'm a *monster* Mike!"

El closed her eyes, shuddering through her tears and trying to gain her composure. It took her less than a second to feel the warm palm cup her cheek and she tensed, feeling Mike's whole body so close as he took a final step towards her.

His breath tickled her face, igniting her senses as he whispered, "you're not a monster."

"I *am*," El whimpered back, her eyes still tightly closed as she tried to grasp at her control that was floating away from her body.

"No," Mike breathed, El's ghost heart racing as fast as his when she felt his body press carefully against her own, her back brushing the bark of the tree as his warm breath tickled against her lips, her chest stuttering out a gasp as she realised what he was going to do.

She couldn't stop it. It was what she was always meant to do, what her soul had been created for. To be with Mike, *forever*.

El felt Mike's free hand move to her waist as her hands instinctively gripped onto his arms while his lips closed the small distance to her own. The touch so powerful it could have brought her back to life.

She sucked in a sharp breath through her nose as Mike's lips pushed a little more firmly, making her feel faint as her predatory nature roared with delight.

Mike carefully broke the kiss, his lips just a breath away from hers and not moving. She knew he was waiting for her approval before he kissed her again. El slowly opened her eyes and looked up at Mike, not surprised by his intake of breath at the immediate change in her irises. She knew they had to be a deep red by now

El thought Mike would recoil in fear but instead he stroked her cheek with his thumb, his skin slightly rough against her soft cheek, causing a warm sensation to fill her chest again. His amber eyes stayed on her red eyes, searching the depths with adoration. "Beautiful," he whispered.

His words broke a tether within El, and in that instant her self-control snapped. Her fingers moved to his knitted sweater, clutching the material in her fists as she whirled them around, Mike giving a gasp as she pushed him against the tree and captured his mouth with hers. His surprise turned into a deep groan as he wrapped his arms around her waist to pull her even closer.

El leaned into him, completely consumed by the feel of his hard body against her curves as she arched her back, wanting her every being to be filled with him. Her fingers scraped into his hair, clutching the locks as she pulled his head down to deepen the kiss.

Her tongue flicked over his mouth, her eyes dilating and a soft hum leaving her chest at the delicious taste of his skin. He opened his mouth against her, willing and wanting her to take what she needed, because he needed it too.

Their tongues met in a ferocious battle, their moans and gasps mixing with hot panting breaths as they kissed with a burning passion. His hands were everywhere, moving up and down the curve of her waist, his palms hot as they flattened against her back before gripping at her hips.

"El," Mike exhaled in a groan, his words lost against her tongue as she ravished at him, devouring his lips with her own. She didn't want to



talk, she just wanted to *feel*.

With one hand still firmly in his dark locks, the other moved down his throat, her finger nails scraping against the sensitive skin as he shuddered against her. Her hand kept on moving as their lips met in scorching kisses, neither of them breaking for air. Her fingers moved to the edge of his sweater, her hand sliding under the material and brushing against his abdomen.

The muscles jumped at her cold touch making them both moan loudly into each other's mouths. Their kisses were frantic and El found herself wanting *more*.

She didn't realise her fangs were out until one of the scraped against Mike's lower lip, initiating a gasp to leave his mouth as El's instincts went into overdrive the moment she smelled his blood.

Her mind fogged, her brain dazed with the intoxicating smell. She pulled back enough to look down at Mike's bottom lip, watching him panting as a thick line of rich blood swirled down from his plump lip and onto his chin.

El's eyes darkened as she watched the blood, *Mike's* blood. Her body shuddering and her instincts screaming. She looked into his eyes, finding the amber orbs already staring at her. A mixture of fear, awe, desire and love flickering like fire in his gaze as he watched her completely captivated.

The hand that was in his hair slid down to his cheek and she angled his head back, feeling his hot and shaking breath as the top of his head brushed against the bark of the old tree. She got as close to the blood as possible, watching it in fascination as the movement of tilting Mike's head made the blood curved under his jaw line and swirl onto his neck.

El closed her eyes for a moment, inhaling the delicious smell of Mike's blood before her tongue was once again on his mouth, licking the line of red liquid, slowly, savouring every drop that hit her tongue. A soft moan left El's lips as she traced the blood path down to Mike's neck and heard him croak, "oh god" in a husky groan that made his Adam's Apple bob in the most tantalising way.

His hands gripped so tightly at her hips it would have been painful if El wasn't so focused on sweeping up the blood with her tongue, whines and whimpers of lust leaving her chest at getting what she had been craving for so long.

"You taste *so* good," El whispered against Mike's neck, hearing him groan and grunt in pleasure as her hand continued to move across his abdomen, her nails scratching delicately against his skin, making him shiver under her touch.

El pressed her mouth against Mike's pulse, feeling it jump and race as she smiled against his warm skin. "Do you know I could take what I want from you?" she murmured whilst Mike trembled, his chest heaving with desire.

"Take it," he whispered through a strained voice. "I *want* you to take it."

El blinked, his words washing over her like a bucket of ice. She realised what she was doing, what she was *about* to do. "No," she croaked, her own body shaking no longer with desire but disgust at how easily she had lost her control. El backed away, her hands leaving his cheek and stomach while Mike panted, looking at her in confusion through dark and dilated eyes.

"El," Mike exhaled breathlessly as he tried reaching out to her, but she took a very steady step away from him, her eyes filled with fear.

"Do you see what I almost *did*?!" she shouted, shaking with remorse and guilt. "Mike I...I almost *killed* you, so you could be with me." Tears spilled down her cheeks. "Will was right, you don't deserve this life Mike. You need to stay away from me."

"El no," Mike panicked, stumbling towards her, his eyes wide at the horror of them being separated again. "El please, I know...I *know* what you are. I can see it now and I'm not afraid. I *promise* I'm not afraid."

El looked at Mike wildly, shaking her head and backing off. "You should be afraid Mike. You should run, you should never see me again. Don't you see?! You can *live*! You can get m-married someday,

find another g-girl, someone who can give you *everything*. Give you *children*! I...I can only curse you."

"El please – "

El shook her head, tearing her gaze away from Mike, seeing his tears was too painful. More excruciating then becoming a vampire. More terrifying than death.

"Good bye Mike."

She was gone, she moved like the wind, using her own powers and the vampire abilities that were seeping in her blood to leave him behind. To rip herself from his side so that he could *live*.

---

Mike was stumbling like he was drunk as he made his way slowly and blearily through Mirkwood back to the Byers house. His ears were ringing, his heart was pounding and his stomach felt so twisted with anxiety that he thought he might be sick.

He had no idea how long he had stayed where El left him. His body weak as he crumbled to the forest floor and rested his head against the tree that had been the location of their first kiss.

All he knew was that the sun had long since set, the shadows filling the woods and the soft rustling of owls and other wildlife breaking through the silence.

His mind was foggy, filled to the point of bursting with everything that had happened, the evidence that had changed a lifelong perspective on life as he suddenly realised that the world was a much bigger and complex place than he could have ever known.

She was a vampire.

He had always known it. It had lingered at the back of his mind, like a whisper as gentle as a caress, just waiting for him to accept the truth.

Mike could barely think straight, relying on his memory to lead his body towards the Byers house. He couldn't help but grimace at the

irony that this is how it all started, being in Mirkwood with El and then going back to the homely house on the edge of the forest.

Except this time, she wasn't by his side because she had fled again. She was so scared at the idea of hurting him that she never even gave him a *chance* to speak. Mike felt beyond frustrated that he couldn't have just told her, that a future without her wasn't *living*.

How could he ever be happy knowing his soul mate existed; that he had met her, fallen deeply in love with her and yet couldn't have her? That sounded like a fate worse than death.

Flickering lights grabbed Mike's attention for a moment and he sighed in relief having reached the Byers house. He wasn't too surprised to see Will sat on the top step of the porch, his eyes wide and panicked as he searched around before settling on Mike. Relief filled his brown eyes but then he frowned.

"Mike are you okay? Are you hurt?" he hurried to ask as he stood up and walked briskly towards his best friend who was still stumbling.

The moment Will's cold hand grasped his elbow to help stand him up properly Mike froze, his eyes darting to Will's face as the rest of the puzzle slotted into place. "You're a vampire too, aren't you?" he said weakly, not surprised when his best friend's eyes widened in horror at the question.

"Shit," Mike groaned rubbing a palm over his eyes before dropping his hand and looking to Will who seemed too stunned to speak. "And Dustin and Lucas? They're vampires as well, *right?*!" Mike could feel his frustration bubbling up into anger. "Just tell me the *truth* Will!"

Will sighed and took a step back from Mike when it seemed obvious that he could stand on his own two feet. "Mike, we wanted to tell you but – "

"No Will!" Mike exploded, his hands flailing at his sides in fury. "We're meant to be *best friends*! We're the *party*, why the hell would you *not* tell me?!"

"Because we were scared," Will blurted out, his eyes swimming with

guilty tears as he beseeched Mike, making him feel immediately guilty, especially because *scared* was the same word El had used.

Will sighed heavily and carried on, "we were scared you wouldn't want to be friends with us anymore. We were scared we might *hurt* you."

"That's crazy," Mike exclaimed looking at Will as if he were crazy. "You, Lucas and Dustin could never hurt me, we're like brothers."

Will shook his head, looking tired and pained. "Being a vampire...it doesn't work like that okay? We all get attracted to scents, and this is all early days, for me and the guys *and* for El. Thankfully me, Lucas and Dustin think you smell kind of gross but El..."

Mike's eyes widened at what Will was saying, as El's earlier words burst through his clogged mind. "*Will was right, you don't deserve this life Mike. You need to stay away from me.*"

Truth hit Mike like a ton of bricks that all sank to the bottom of his stomach. He closed his eyes tightly and exhaled a heavy breath. "You told El to stay away from me..."

Mike could hear Will's sigh of sadness, he could practically feel the anguish as if it was tangible in the air. "I just wanted you to be safe Mike. I wanted you to have a choice. Me and El, even Dustin didn't get that choice. We didn't choose this life and we didn't want it to be forced on you."

Mike opened his eyes sharply and looked at Will. He understood why he had acted the way he had. He had done what any good friend would do, try and protect their best friend, keep them from the curse at any costs.

"Will," Mike said in a strong voice. "That means everything to me that you would be so willing to try and save my life. To try and keep me from all of this. But I'm *not* living without her Will. I'm in love with her and she's in love with me. This isn't some teenage romance or crush. She's my *soulmate*, she feels it and I feel it. I want to be with her, no matter what the cost is."

The best friends, more like brothers stared at each other for a moment, both of them accepting and taking in the other one's opinion.

"It's not an easy life," Will finally sighed. "Who knows what end we will all meet and if we will someday be exposed."

"No one can know," Mike agreed taking a step towards Will and smiling slightly. "But we could do this. Together. Me, El, you, Dustin and Lucas, and I'm guessing Max?" When Will nodded Mike continued. "You guys are my family, *El* is my family. Please don't turn me away."

The last resistance flickered out of Will's eyes like a candle being blown out. He smiled sheepishly and opened up his arms, "welcome to the family I guess," he teased as Mike laughed and rushed forward to hug him.

They gripped at each other for a moment, trying to comprehend the seriousness of Mike's decision.

"Mike?" Will's slightly muffled voice croaked from his shoulder.

"Yeah?"

"You really do stink."

"Thanks Will."

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AN: I have been writing this all day and I enjoyed every second of it :-)

Please let me know what you think, I'd love to know your thoughts!

Also thank you to everyone who has commented, favourited or left a kudos so far. I appreciate it SO much!

## 4. Take My Whole Life

The Dark Side

AN: I'm sorry I'm getting this out to you so late on Halloween night! I've been very busy now that my work schedule has increased, but I really tried to get this completed for Halloween, so I hope you enjoy it! :-)

Also, I have done a quick proof read, but I'm sure there's still a million errors, so apologies in advance haha

**Warning:** Sexual content, adult themes and vampire themes that you should not be messing with!

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### Chapter 4: Take My Whole Life

*Take my hand*

*Take my whole life too*

*For I can't help*

*Falling in love with you*

Hawkins had always been an unusual town. Old fashioned, remote and boring, nothing that really made it *special*. At least not on the surface.

Below that superficial exterior was a mind field of mysteries, a twisted vine of lies and dark secrets. It was something Mike had never known, living within the veil of ignorance until he had his eyes opened to the truth. Until he had seen *El*.

He should have known from the first moment that he saw her what she was, his smart mind denying the truth, while his heart and soul were more than willing to accept El for what she was. *A vampire*.

Even twisting the word around his brain multiple times still seemed to blow Mike's mind.

It was the day before Halloween and Mike found himself going for a drive around the town that he had once thought he knew so well. His palms were slightly clammy as he gripped onto the steering wheel, cruising at a steady speed while his gaze flickered from the road to the regular sites of Hawkins.

He found a small smile twitching at his lips as he drove past the Palace Arcade, memories of many summer days and nights spent playing Dragons Lair with the boys flashing through his mind. Mike had always been the worst at the arcade games, much preferring his role as Dungeon's Master in their game of D&D.

Mike turned his attention away from the Palace Arcade and focused back on the road until he once again looked over at The Hawk movie theatre. He could practically see the imprinted memories of himself, Will, Dustin and Lucas spilling out onto the pavement, buzzing with excitement after seeing *Ghost Busters* or *Back to The Future*.

It seemed like a whole life time ago, especially now that Mike's whole world had just become a million times larger. Things he had only thought were a myth now sparkled with blinding clarity.

He continued to drive, his mind still racing with endless thoughts and possibilities before he pulled up to his destination. Mike looked up at the large school building and smiled, his eyes warm as he took in the *Hawkins Middle School* sign printed into the rough brick wall.

The school was out of session for fall break, so the parking lot was empty except for Mike who clambered out of his car and locked the door behind him, keeping his eyes on the school.

He walked around the building, nostalgia filling his senses and making his chest tight with emotion. His dark amber eyes moved across to the elementary school, a wide smile lifting his lips as he noticed the swings in the distance. They were the same set that Mike had found Will at, his first best friend and brother. The sound of innocent child laughter seemed to fill his ears like a whisper in the wind as his mind took him back to that simpler time.

It wasn't long before Lucas joined the boys, his personality fitting in like it should have always been there. And then Dustin arrived, and



Mike knew they were complete.

And while the party was formed and the years that would follow would be filled with laughter, happiness and innocent joy, they had to eventually grow up.

It wasn't until Mike hit 13 that he started to think of the other half of him, the side not witnessed or seen by the party, the side that belonged to another and lay in wait until that person arrived. It was the part of him that he had willingly given to El the moment their eyes locked on each other.

Even just thinking about her was making his heart race as Mike suddenly felt breathless at the memory of their last encounter. His rough finger tips gently brushed against his bottom lip where a thin cut was starting to heal, the skin knitting together to disguise the damage caused by El's teeth. Or should he say fangs?

Mike shook his head violently to try and make sense of everything as he unconsciously made his way to the elementary school. El was a *vampire*, Lucas, Dustin and Will too. He found himself letting out a laugh of surprise at what had taken place in Hawkins in the past year while he was away at college.

He knew Max was the reason for all of this; Will having sat him down on the porch the night before and talked through it all. Explaining how him and El had been in Mirkwood at Castle Byers when Max had been attracted to their scent, how they had both been powerless to her attack.

Will went into detail about the agony of the transition from his human life to his new eternal state of existence. How he could feel the poison seeping through his body until it succumbed to the dark side. He talked about how hard it was to resist human blood, and the heart break Joyce and Jonathan experienced at his new condition.

Mike knew Will was trying to put him off the idea of becoming a vampire, trying to get him to change his mind by telling him the brutal truth. But *nothing* could change Mike's mind. He wanted to be with El forever, and this was the only way.

Without realising it Mike had reached the swing set and hesitantly sat down on the rubber seat, thankful he was skinny enough to just about fit without the chains digging into his hip bones.

His hands tightened around the cold links of metal as he kicked at the ground and swung back and forth, his dark hair whipping away from his face as he closed his eyes and smiled. Mike had forgotten how liberating being on the swing felt; the tilt of central gravity, the rush of air brushing against his skin and the excitement of going faster.

Mike breathed in deeply, filling his lungs with fresh air and clearing his mind of all thoughts, except one. There wasn't any time when he didn't think about her. She was always there, always present in his heart and always lingering in his thoughts. Those hazel red eyes capturing him from the inside out.

He opened his eyes and scuffed his sneakers against the soft rubber playground floor as he brought himself to a stop. Mike looked at the closed school, his eyes moving to the middle school before craning his neck to look at the high school across the street.

Within this small radius he had spent most of his childhood; being bullied, getting the highest grades, becoming the president of the AV club, making memories good and bad, and making the best friends he could have ever wished for. Friends who would now be in his world for all of eternity.

With a smile Mike got off the swings and exhaled a steady breath as he looked back up at the school. Walking away and saying goodbye to his childhood, to his pure innocence.

He didn't look back.

---

"Close your eyes," Max murmured in concentration as El's eyelids fluttered shut while the red head slowly applied a shimmering gold glitter with a small makeup brush.

El tried to sit as still as possible while Max helped her to get ready for the Halloween party at the club.

Max had been talking about them going to the club for *weeks*, her excitement of meeting others like them was tangible and definitely had Dustin sold on the idea once Max explained there would be plenty of female vampires dancing the night away.

"Open your eyes," Max said quietly as El's lashes flickered and she opened her eyes, looking back into the blue ones while the red head appraised her work.

Max smiled wickedly, "you look so innocent it's *sinful*."

El gave the red head a weak smile while her fingers played with the material of her short white skater dress. The spaghetti straps in the back of the dress had strips of lace intricately stitched together to give the appearance of wings. It was a beautiful dress, and with El's wavy hair brushing against her shoulders, pushed back slightly from her face with the head band containing her halo, she did look angelic.

Images of biting into Mike's lip, licking his blood's path with her tongue and going in for the kill flashed through her mind, causing her stomach to twist in guilt. She certainly wasn't angelic.

It was two days since she had seen Mike. Two days since she had gone too far, almost ending his life, but breaking both their hearts instead.

El sighed heavily, looking down at her dress and wondering if going out tonight with the party was the best idea.

"What's wrong Ellie?" Max asked softly, El not realising that her only female friend had been studying her solemn expression, her blue eyes flickering over El's face.

When she looked up at Max it was to see her dressed as a Day of the Dead character, her face painted to resemble a skeleton with beautiful sequins and colourful designs. Perhaps it would have been funny to have such a serious conversation when Max was dressed like this, but nothing about the situation made El want to laugh.

She closed her eyes, taking a deep exhale which pained her tight

chest. "I don't think you would understand," El finally choked out, desperately trying not to cry, especially now that Max had finished her make up.

El felt a soft and cold hand on her bare knee and she opened her eyes to find Max looking at her not with amusement or wicked curiosity, but with care, *empathy*. "Try me," she said seriously.

And as El stared back at her friend, all of the pain she had been holding inside of her body burst out like a dam breaking.

"I've fallen in love with a human," she sobbed in a broken voice. "He's my s-soulmate, he's beautiful and *good*, and so perfect. And I can't have him."

Max looked confused and opened her mouth to speak but El carried on, knowing that now she had started she needed to get all of the guilt, anger and frustration out of her system.

"The worst thing is that I broke *both* of our hearts because I can't give him what he wants. He deserves *everything* Max. A full life, a wife, children, grandchildren. And I'm *mad*!" El could feel her blood start to boil. "I'm mad at myself for not being able to control myself around him, I'm mad at *him* for not being able to stay away and...and I'm mad at *you* for giving me this *fucking life*!"

El didn't realise she was shaking and screaming out her words until Lucas and Dustin hurried into the room, both of them already in costume as they looked frantically between El and Max who was still sat calmly in front of her.

"Everything okay?" Lucas asked nervously, his brown red eyes flicking between the girls.

There was silence for a moment, the only sound being El's sniffles as she wrung her hands together and kept her head low, not wanting the boys to see her face.

Max inhaled and exhaled out of her nose and slowly nodded her head as she looked at Dustin and Lucas giving them a small smile of reassurance, "yes everything's fine. Can you just give me and El a

minute please?"

"Aw I was hoping to see a real vampire bitch fight," Dustin teased hoping to alleviate the situation.

Lucas rolled his eyes and shoved his friend's shoulder, "shut up Dustin, you're so annoying," he mumbled as he turned to leave the room.

"Am *not*! I'm fucking cool!" Dustin argued back, their voices still raised in the corridor.

"You're going to this party dressed as a *vampire*. You're basically going as yourself..."

"I'm *Count Dracula* actually you mouthbreather."

"Bite me."

"I just might if you keep talking shit!"

Through the tense air in the bedroom El and Max both broke the silence with a snort of laughter, El wiping at her tears foolishly. "I'm sorry," she muttered in Max's direction.

"No, *I'm* sorry El. I'm *so* sorry" Max said in a wavering voice, the tone surprising El so greatly that she immediately looked up at the red head to find tears in her blue red eyes.

El sighed heavily, feeling guilty for her outburst. "Max – "

"No El," Max interjected quickly, holding her hand up apologetically to stop her saying anymore. "It is *completely* my fault that you all have this life. I just..." Max shook her head and heaved her chest as she tried to keep her composure. "When I was turned into a vampire it was *brutal*, a gang of vampires attacked me, and I went from one horrible existence to the next."

"After I got away from them and killed my step dad and step brother, I fled trying to get as far away from my past as I could. That's when I found Lucas..." Max paused to smile softly at the thought of her mate.

"I had never felt an attraction like it and I just had to have him. It was selfish I know, but every day he tells me he wouldn't have it any other way, that he wants me forever."

Max sighed and ran a hand through her hair. "But he introduced me to Dustin and I found myself struggling once again to control myself. I had only ever had human blood, I wasn't eating and drinking the animals we do now. I was completely *untamed*, and I went wild. I got Dustin and then I wanted more, I wanted something I had never had. A *real* family, people who I loved and loved me in return. And then we found Will and you, and I just knew I had to have you both."

When Max mentioned a real family, El flinched thinking of Mike's brooding thoughts over his parent's constant disapproval of his life and his choices. How all he wanted was to be loved by them.

It made El think about Hopper, and how he loved her regardless of what she was, how she allowed him to stay in her life and he returned the favour, being the father she had always deserved.

"I was selfish and I'm sorry. I will *always* be sorry," Max whispered in a heavy voice filled with guilt and so much anguish that El could feel it in the air. She had turned Max's thoughts off, not needing to hear her sorrow even more than it was already displayed.

El nodded, feeling numb from the void in her chest that had been created the moment she walked away from Mike. "I just wish I could be with him, forever."

"Well why can't you?" Max asked in confusion watching El closely. "He loves you too. Surely he wants this?"

"He might think he wants this, but he doesn't deserve it Max," El mumbled quietly, looking down at her fingernails as she remembered the feeling of Mike's abdominal muscles jumping under her hungry touch.

Max laughed, not out of amusement but from exasperation. "What, he doesn't deserve to be with his *soulmate*? He doesn't deserve to get to spend all of eternity with the one person he's meant to be with?" Max scoffed and shook her head, "I'm sorry El but that's bullshit, and you

know it."

El looked sharply at Max feeling mildly offended but didn't get to answer before the red head was hurrying to speak again. "You need to stop thinking of it as *ending* his life and think of it more as *starting* his life. Giving him the life he was meant to have with you by his side."

El couldn't help but ponder Max's words, her heart and soul desperate to agree. Even just allowing the thought into her mind of actually turning him into a vampire was dangerous. She knew it wouldn't take much to break the wall she had put up against Mike and her desperation to be with him, mind, body and soul.

Max reached for El's hand, squeezing it gently and smiling supportively at her. "Just think about it okay? He deserves you and you deserve him. It's simple."

El couldn't help but smile, even if it was etched with nerves and endless worries and possibilities. Max looked her over and rolled her eyes in amusement picking up the cosmetic brush, "you've totally ruined your make up you little witch."

El laughed, the weight in her stomach lifting ever so slightly as she obediently closed her eyes and allowed Max to get back to work. "I'm an angel actually," she teased back, grinning away.

Max scoffed, "I'm sure the only one who would agree you're an angel is your lover boy."

---

El didn't have much concept of what a club should be like, but she was sure this wasn't it.

Of course there was the elements that she suspected, like the dark lighting, the globe lights changing rapidly from neon purples, deep red and brilliant white. Not only the dance floor was packed, the catchy beat of a song called *Youngblood* was playing and large covens of vampires were dancing to the beat, their arms in the air, their hips swirling in an alluring spell.

The things that *really* made this club different was the bar selling human blood to drink and the vampires occasionally getting into fights over other vampires, their possessive nature not allowing anyone to get near what or who they wanted.

As Max, El and the boys walked into the club, they past two fights, one pair biting at each other in a furious battle over a pretty blonde vampire who seemed bored with their fighting and instead looked over at Dustin with interest.

He grinned back, his eyes lighting up with excitement as she moved away from the squabbling vampires and walked over to him, her bright blue eyes dancing across his body. She was dressed as a nurse, her skirt short which Dustin seemed to pick up on right away as he stared down at her long legs.

"Hi, I'm Laura," she flirted the moment Dustin was in hearing distance, batting her eyelashes at him as she appraised his costume.

He smiled back, bashful but playful. "I'm Dustin, and you must be the woman of my dreams. It's nice to finally met you in person."

Laura giggled and grabbed his hand, "let's dance," she said coyly, giving him a smirk as she pulled him along. Dustin went gladly, his face filled with glee as he enthusiastically waved goodbye to Lucas, Max and El who stood dumbfounded.

"Well...that was...*quick*," Max said impressed, only slightly annoyed that one of her playmates had been taken away. However the moment she looked over at the bar her eyes widened with excitement, "let's get a drink," she breathed out in delight, ushering El and Lucas along.

Will would be attending the club too but insisted he would come later on in the evening, he wasn't exactly keen on a full night of partying. El wished she had got a lift with him instead, because while she plastered a smile on her face she couldn't keep up the appearance of being happy when her heart was aching.

She couldn't help but wonder if she should try and talk to Mike again. Maybe if someone else was in attendance then she'd be able to



control herself. Will would be the perfect mediator. But at the thought of her friend El's stomach twisted with anxiety knowing he would completely disapprove of her wanting to turn Mike. After all, the whole point in her breaking Mike's heart was to abide by her and Will's morals.

El hurried after Max and Lucas who looked incredible in their Day of the Dead costumes. For the first time that evening she noticed how other vampires were looking at her; *hungry*, thirsty with lust. Men and women. She avoided their eyes and kept close to Max who was holding her hand.

They finally made it to the bar, Max and Lucas shoving their way through so that they could prop their elbows on the dark wooden surface and watch the bartenders pouring blood into martini glasses or shot glasses depending on the blood type.

"I swear it doesn't make a difference," a vampire dressed as what appeared to be Harry Potter mumbled.

"It *does*! The rarer blood types give you an instant kick," his friend dressed as Dumbledore argued.

"What can I get you beautiful?" the bartender asked Max, flashing her a smile while Lucas growled beside her in warning.

Max smiled teasingly back at the bartender while stroking Luca's bicep. "Can we have three shots of AB-negative please?"

"Coming right up," he grinned in return, shooting a jealous glare in Lucas direction before getting their drinks.

"You didn't have to get anything for me," El said honestly as she squeezed in next to Max now that Harry Potter and Dumbledore had moved away from the bar. To be honest she wasn't too sure how she felt about drinking human blood, even if it wasn't at the expense of killing to get it. After tasting Mike's blood El was positive everything else would fail in comparison.

"You've got to at least try it Ellie," Max whined, giving the brunette her best puppy dog eyes.

El sighed and nodded, giving in easily when her best friend was so excitable. She watched apprehensively as the bartender pushed the shot glasses filled with deep red liquid in front of them.

She picked up the tiny glass carefully and looked nervously at Max and Lucas who had also grabbed the shots a lot more eagerly than El.

"Okay, on three we all take our shots," Max said happily, her eyes wide with enthusiasm as her blue red eyes flickered between El and Lucas. "One, two, three – "

El closed her eyes and took the shot, feeling the blood run instantly down her throat. She spluttered slightly and wiped at her mouth, but she couldn't deny it did taste good.

"Nice right?" Max asked hopefully while Lucas was already ordering a second round.

El smiled slightly, "yeah it was good, but not as good as..." she didn't finish her sentence as her senses were suddenly filled with that *scent*. She gasped, her eyes wide as the intoxicating smell drew into her nose and made her tremble.

The music had changed, the iconic bass and drums of a classic 80's song starting to fill the club as the vampires continued to dance. But El was frozen, her body too terrified to turn around but knowing that she had too. It couldn't be...*could it?*

*Every breath you take*

*Every move you make*

*Every bond you break*

*Every step you take*

*I'll be watching you*

Slowly, so *very* slowly, El turned around. The lights dancing around the room highlighted certain vampires, but no one shone brighter than the man who had just walked into the club, Will at his side dressed as a werewolf as he looked into the crowd trying to find the

party.

El's jaw slackened as she stared at the man who had haunted her thoughts for four months, the man who made her stolen her heart and soul, the man who she belonged to. *Mike*.

Oh can't you see

You belong to me

My poor heart aches

With every step you take

And just like that he had found her in the crowd. His dark amber eyes locking with her hazel red gaze. She watched his captivating eyes widen in surprise, relief and happiness as a wide grin lifted his beautiful lips.

El gulped, nervous and electrified all at once, not even realising that she had already left Max and Lucas at the bar and was making her way through the crowd, her eyes not leaving Mike's.

He was moving too, ignoring Will who was trying to shield him from eager vampires who were starting to notice that beautiful scent in the air.

They were so close now, the crowd parting slightly to allow them both to pass as El noticed for the first time the black slacks and black button down shirt Mike was wearing, dark and dangerous. With the added red devil horns in his messy jet black hair, he was *mouth-wateringly* sexy. And he belonged to *her*.

The air was charged with electricity, their chemistry practically lighting up the entire club. El watched as Mike stopped in front of her, his eyes daring to trail down her body, taking in the short white dress, her long legs, her wavy hair and the halo on top of her head. His nostrils flared slightly, and his Adam's Apple bounced so deliciously.

"El," he breathed out, his voice laced with want, desire, but most importantly *love*.

"Mike," El choked nervously, her eyes dancing over his gorgeous face and how the flashing lights of the club highlighted his heart-breaking cheek bones. "What are you doing here?" she added breathlessly.

"I brought him," Will answered just as Mike opened his mouth. El was stunned by her friend's revelation and looked at him in bewilderment, willing him to explain.

Will cleared his throat and shared a sheepish smile with Mike before looking back at El. "Look, it was never my place to get in the middle of you two. I love you both and just want the best for you okay?" he said calmly, looking between them both before grinning playfully, "I'll leave you both to um...talk..."

El watched as Mike blushed but mumbled a thanks to Will who patted his shoulder and disappeared into the crowd. She suddenly felt incredibly nervous, her ghost heart daring to race and her stomach doing somersaults as she hesitantly looked back up into Mike's eyes.

*Since you've gone I've been lost without a trace  
I dream at night I can only see your face  
I look around but it's you I can't replace  
I feel so cold and I long for your embrace  
I keep crying baby, baby, please*

"So," she croaked clearing her throat and trying again. "Maybe we should ta – "

El didn't get another word out before Mike's lips were on hers, his palms resting on her cheeks as she gasped in surprise at the sudden contact filling her senses. Her eyes rapidly dilated, the redness pooling into her irises as lust and desire boiled her blood and a moan escaped her throat, swallowed up by Mike's kiss as he coerced her mouth open with his sinful lips.

His hands were on her hips, his thumbs brushing against the white material of her dress as El knitted her fingers into Mike's hair, carefully avoiding the devil horns as she succumbed to his kiss, their tongues stroking and tasting, and *oh god* she wanted him.

Just as she felt her fangs break through her gums she pulled back,

moving out of Mike's hold when he tried to chase her lips. "Mike," El said panting from the hot and heavy kisses they had just been sharing, her body feeling more alive than when she was human. "What are you doing here?" she repeated her earlier question more seriously now.

Mike was breathing heavily too, his broad chest rising and falling in the most tantalising way that had El's eyes distracted for a minute before she remembered she had asked him a question.

"I've come for you of course," Mike said calmly, a tender smile curving up those plump lips. El noticed the scar that she had caused on his bottom lip trying to heal and it made her body tense as she remembered that she had hurt him.

"I don't understand," El replied shaking her head and looking imploringly into Mike's amber eyes, his pupils blown from desire.

She gulped nervously when he reached for her hand, entwining their fingers before tugging her forward so that their chests pressed together. The feeling was so overwhelming El had no idea how she was still standing.

Mike didn't speak for the moment, just stared deep into her eyes, going past the layers that made her a vampire and reaching her soul, connecting with her on a higher level.

He smiled softly, his eyes warm and lovingly. "I thought about everything you said El," he said in a gentle tone. "I thought about life with someone else, another woman who wasn't you and children, and grandchildren even."

Tears began to flood into El's vision as she realised what this was. It was Mike saying good bye, telling her that he finally accepted that she was no good for him and he would move on.

Mike took a deep breath, keeping his eyes locked on El's as he reached out and stroked her cheek, brushing away the tears that had already escaped her lower lashes.

"I realised I don't *want* a life without you in it. I'm not *living* without

you."

El's breath stuttered in her throat, her hazel red eyes widening as she tried to take in what Mike had just said, and what the implications of his words meant.

He smiled, relief in his eyes at finally getting to speak his mind. "I love you El, more than anything. *More* than life. I want you forever, and an eternity by your side sounds like everything I could have *ever* wished for."

Tears streamed down El's cheeks now as she looked up at Mike in wonder, her lips slightly parted in awe of his words. "Y-You...you want *this* life with *me*?"

Mike grinned, nodding his head while his eyes twinkled with warmth. "And every life after," he said softly, making El's skin tingle.

She was smiling, unable to stop it as she continued to stare at Mike in utter disbelief. "B-But...you'd have to become a vampire," El croaked, her eyes filled with dismay while Mike chuckled at her stunned reaction.

He smirked, playfully leaning over her so that his lips brushed against the shell of her ear. El gulped, her fangs immediately pricking her gums at the sensual feeling of Mike's warm breath on her sensitive skin.

"I want you to be the one to do it," he whispered in a caress, while his hands moved back to her hips, he squeezed them gently, bunching her dress slightly within his fists and making El pant.

She couldn't stop the excitement rushing through her body, the desire burning low in her gut and the fire behind her eyes as Mike pulled away from her ear just enough to look into her eyes. She gasped at the arousal she saw within his amber orbs, it made a shiver run down her spine and for her throat to grow increasingly dry.

Before she could reply or even just do it right there in the middle of the club, which seemed like the preferred option by the way Mike was looking at her, there was suddenly the presence of someone else.

"Are you lost human?" a haunting voice asked. El whipped her head around to see a few female and male vampires lurking around, their eyes hungry as they eyed up Mike.

The haunting voice belonged to a dark-haired vampire, who was very beautiful. Her green red eyes flickering over Mike with thirst.

The look in this vampire's eyes did something to El, who immediately bared her fangs, stepping into Mike's hold, her arms going possessively around his waist as she continued to glare at the vampire.

"He's taken. And he isn't going with *any* of you," El hissed as her suddenly deep red eyes flickered dangerously between the pretty vampire and the others who reluctantly turned away from Mike, giving him one more wistful look.

The pretty vampire stayed a bit longer, El and her having a glaring contest, El not backing down as she continued to glower dangerously at this bitch of a vampire. Finally her rival huffed in frustration and tore her gaze away from Mike and El, disappearing into the crowd.

"Woah..." Mike croaked, his eyes wide as he blinked rapidly. "That's was intense."

El flinched, her dominance disappearing as she turned a concerned gaze onto Mike, her cold palms cupping his face as she brought him closer, her eyes dancing over his face as if looking for injury.

"Are you okay?" El asked Mike breathlessly.

Mike laughed in surprise, a wide grin spreading on his lips as he stared down at El. "I'm more than okay...that was...hot." His smile became more of a cheeky smoulder as he continued to gaze at her like she invented the sun, moon and stars. "You're so hot El."

She couldn't help the smirk that played on her face at winning her man. El pushed up on her tip toes so that their mouths just brushed over each other. She continued to look into his eyes, the moment just for them. "You are *mine*," El whispered, her breath making Mike's lips twitch with need as he let out a gasp. "My soulmate, my lover, *mine*."

And when I turn you, I promise I'll make you feel good."

Mike gulped, his eyes blown as he stared back at El. "C-Can we go and do it now?" he croaked out making them both laugh in surprise at his very forward words.

El sighed happily, leaning up further to nuzzle her nose against Mike's. "Why don't we enjoy your last night as a human first?" she suggested softly.

Mike gulped and nodded eagerly, a tender smile erupting onto his lips as he continued to gaze at her.

---

Mike didn't really know what he was expecting when he arrived at the underground secret club with Will, his heart racing with the need to see El again and his body fuelled with adrenaline and a flicker of nerves at seeing such a large number of vampires.

"Just stay by my side until we find El," Will had muttered to him seriously as they made their way down the dimly light staircase towards the club. "I don't know how quickly it's going to take the other vampires to realise there's a human amongst them."

Mike had gulped and nodded his head in agreement, feeling slightly more anxious than he had earlier in the evening when he got ready for Halloween night. He wasn't exactly dressed up to the nine's, but he hoped El would appreciate the effort of his devil horns. Will however had gone all out, dressed as a werewolf complete with lenses to make his eyes icy blue.

The moment they had walked through the entrance Mike's lips parted in surprise as he took in the sight of over fifty vampires, dancing, drinking, arguing, kissing and laughing. He tried not to shudder at the glasses of blood he noticed being passed across the dark wooden bar or the way vampires were biting one another as they snapped in anger.

But the moment Mike caught sight of the angel who was facing the bar, his heart jumped instantly into his throat. His eyes widened and he was suddenly breathless, his body exploding with love and desire



when the vision in white turned around and he stared into the intoxicating eyes of El.

"Wow," Mike exhaled in a sharp breath as he moved towards the beauty, all nerves and fears completely leaving him. She was all that mattered, being with her was everything he could ever want, and *ever* need.

And now their fingers were entwined, slotting together perfectly while El playfully pulled him along to where she had seen the party congregating. They were all sat around a plush deep purple booth against one of the black painted walls.

Mike noticed the red head who he could only assume was Max. She was in a costume matching Lucas's who was sat next to her, laughing at something she was whispering in his ear. Mike wasn't sure what he should make of her, after all if it wasn't for Max than life could have been very different. But at the end of the day, he still was going to get what he wanted, *El*, for all eternity.

As if sensing his thoughts El looked at him over her shoulder, a gentle smile curving those beautiful lips and making Mike's heart melt into a puddle. He knew he had to be giving her heart eyes right now, he could practically feel how soft his gaze was and the hopeless smile that played on his face. But he didn't care, and he couldn't hide his love for her. She was tantalising and completely overwhelming in the most incredible way. Mike knew he would never get enough of her.

"*Mike?*" Lucas called in confusion, looking between his friend, El and their joined hands, immediately noticing their matching euphoric smiles.

"Hey Lucas," Mike replied smiling almost shyly, knowing this was the *last* place any of his friends would expect to find him.

"What are you doing here?" Lucas mused with a confused smile as he stood up from the booth.

Before Mike could answer however Max had stood up too, her blue red eyes flickering up and down Mike's form, an appreciative smile on her lips. "Ah...so this is the lover boy," she said in a teasing voice

before turning her gaze onto El who immediately glared at her friend, a dominating flicker of fire back in her eyes.

"Max *don't* call him that..."

"Wait," Lucas gasped in excitement as he looked between Mike and El so quickly it looked like he might get a crick in his neck. "Are you guys together?!"

Mike couldn't help the proud grin that exploded on his face at finally being able to show El off as his. To be able to put a label on their undeniable feelings for each other. With a jolt of courage and happiness Mike moved his arm around El's slim waist, pulling her closer to his body.

She looked up at him in surprise, awe and wonder in her enticing eyes before they turned even more desirable as sparks of mischief flickered to life. "Yes," Mike breathed out through a wide smile. "We are together."

While he was answering Lucas's question he couldn't take his eyes off El, their gaze locked in an almost private moment in the busy and loud club. For the moment it was like all of the sounds dimmed out, everyone disappeared, and they were quite alone. Mike only had eyes for El, captivated by the warm glow of her soul practically visible to him, the desire in her eyes and the sinfully gorgeous shape of her body. She was perfection.

Slowly like a gentle pulse, everything else started to come back into clarity. The pounding music had changed to a song Mike was vaguely familiar with called *Beautiful Monster* and El smirked, clearly familiar with the modern beat.

She moved into his touch, her flat palm sliding up his black button down shirt covered chest. She leaned up, her lips brushing against Mike's ear making him shiver and gulp against the lump in his throat. "Let's dance," she whispered in a sultry voice before moving her hand down until she reached his twitching fingers, lacing their hands together once more before pulling him through the crowd and into the middle of the floor, neither of them noticing that they had left a bemused Lucas and Max behind.

*All my life  
And the hereafter  
I've never seen  
Seen one like you  
You're a knife  
Sharp and deadly  
And it's me  
That you cut into*

The beat was vibrating through Mike's body, the music pounding in his ears, his heart racing as his eyes lingered down El's exposed back, the delicate lace of her angel wings caressing softly against her skin. Mike was filled with the need to touch that skin, kiss *every* inch.

*But I don't mind  
In fact I like it  
Though I'm terrified  
I'm turned on but scared of you, oh*

In the moment he forgot that he was a terrible dancer and allowed El to continue pulling him along. He was like a moth to the flame, he would follow her to the end of the world and beyond.

El turned around, her alluring smile and hazel red eyes pulling Mike forward. His hands found her waist while her fingers traced up and down his button up shirt, her eyes hungry as they danced over his body. Mike couldn't help but shiver with anticipation as he met her dark gaze.

She kept her changing eyes on him as she started to sway her hips to the beat, her whole body moving in a way that completely captivated Mike, boiling his blood because damnit he *wanted* her. And he needed her tonight.

El bit her lower lip, Mike gulping as he watched through heavily lidded eyes as she slowly released the plump flesh. A primal groan ripped from his chest as a mischievous expression flickered over El's face as she turned around in his hold and backed her body up to his.

*In her eyes  
There's love and fire*

*And my heart  
She's burning through  
But I don't mind  
In fact I like it  
Though I'm terrified  
I'm turned on but scared of you*

Mike's large hands moved possessively to her hips just as she pressed her back against his chest, almost sinking into his skin at her proximity. A choked gasp escaped his lips when she rolled her hips back against his crotch.

*Playing with my heart, mmm  
And she's playing with my mind*

Her cold fingers brushed over his hands which held her hips tightly as she danced up against him, his body on fire with lust as all the blood rushed from his head and steamed ahead to the pit of his stomach.

El's fingers grasped a hold on his hands, moving them off her hips and making them stroke up and down her stomach as she breathed heavily against him, Mike's eyes dilated to the extreme as he brought his face down to the side of her neck, panting against her cool skin as he left desperate kisses across her intoxicating flesh.

Mike felt a whimper quiver through El's throat and he found himself grinning against her skin that he could have that kind of effect on her. It made the flames of arousal inside of his body reach new heights as he realised he wanted to do *more* and *more* until she could no longer resist him.

*She's a monster  
Beautiful monster  
Beautiful monster  
But I don't mind  
And I need her  
Said I need her*

El tilted her head back against Mike's chest, he was sure she would be able to hear the pounding of his heart. Every beat for *her*, every piece

of his existence created so that they could have this moment, so that they could burn in the flames of passion together.

Mike's mouth moved to her ear again, a jolt of pleasure rushing straight to his groin as El gasped when he pulled her lobe between his teeth, nibbling it playfully before flicking his tongue over the flesh in a slow caress to sooth the pain.

"Mike" El choked out in a breathless voice that made Mike groan against her ear, his hands moving across the fabric of her dress, his fingers brushing underneath her chest and over her hip.

"You're so beautiful," Mike murmured against her skin making El shiver against his firm hold. She hummed softly, her eyes closed as she tried to contain her pleasure. Mike moved his hands to her waist and spun her around, startling her enough to open her eyes as she looked up at him breathless.

Mike's body flooded with blinding desire as he stared into El's now dark red eyes and he couldn't help the excitement that flickered in his eyes. She wanted him too, he could see it like a burning fire in those incredible orbs.

"There's *one* more thing I want to do as a human," Mike said in a husky voice, his chest still panting from the arousal burning him from the inside out.

El's slightly parted lips curved into a delicious and knowing smile, her eyes burning passionately at his words. She reached for his hand and smirked, her eyebrow arching seductively as she said, "let's go."

---

The next twenty minutes or so felt like a blur to Mike; Will gripping him a little tighter as they hugged goodbye, both of them knowing this would be the last time he would see him alive.

"You sure you want to do this?" Will whispered to him when they pulled away.

Mike couldn't help but smile softly, his eyes catching El's as she was hugging Max but looking at him over the shoulder of the red head.

They grinned at each other, love and desire pouring into the stare. "Yes," Mike replied, his eyes still on his soul mate.

They had left the club together hand in hand, laughing at Dustin making out with a blonde vampire dressed as a nurse on the dancefloor and sharing knowing smirks when a male vampire also dressed as a werewolf came up to Will with a bright smile and said, "nice costume. Great minds think alike."

If Will could blush, then he would have. Mike and El left just as the other werewolf said his name was Daniel and offered a bashful Will a drink.

Mike couldn't stop smiling as he walked up the stairs with El, momentarily stalling them when he pushed her up against the black wall, their lips crashing together passionately as they groaned into each other's mouths. El's hands found his hair almost immediately, tugging on the locks in a way that sent a shiver down Mike's spine.

Eventually they had to stop when a vampire dressed like a dentist grumbled that they go find a room. Mike blushed but couldn't help the eager grin quirking on his slightly swollen lips when he realised that's exactly what they were about to do.

"So," Mike said breathlessly as he turned to El, both of them sitting in his car, their eyes happy as they danced over each other's faces, admiring the sharp lines and smooth skin. "Where should we go?"

El gave him a teasing smile, her hand moving to his thigh, her thumb drawing circles against his skin and making him gulp with desire and nerves. "The cabin," she whispered in the silence of the car, the only sound being Mike's racing heart and their unsteady breaths. "I'll direct you."

Mike nodded, his Adam's apple bobbing as he gripped one hand on the steering wheel and used the other to link with El's hand on his thigh, loving the feeling of being connected to her. It made him feel complete, like he no longer had a missing part of his soul.

The drive to the cabin was quiet except for the occasional direction from El said in such a gentle tone that it made Mike's heart swoon.

They both basked in the comfortable silence, the feeling of just being there, right next to each other and allowing their scents to mix together in one tantalising embrace.

The cabin was *exactly* what Mike expected, remote and hidden away in the middle of the woods. He wanted to laugh knowing he never would have found it alone. But of course he *wasn't* alone, he had the girl of his dreams holding his hand as she navigated her way through the dark forest, murmuring to him that it wasn't too far now.

Eventually the wooden structure came into view and Mike was surprised by its size even when El explained that her adoptive father had extended the cabin to make room for Dustin, Lucas and Max.

Mike walked in first, his eyes filled with curiosity as he looked around the space. Well there was no coffins and the place was not filled by large candles with wax spilling over the side. It was *homely*, the lamps adding warmth to the living room and the log burner looking comforting and cosy.

El gave him a quick tour, stopping them at her bedroom. Mike smiled softly as he looked around the yellow painted room. The bed was central, made out of a beach wood that had been painted white, with yellow and cream bedding. She had a long window that through the gap in the trees had a beautiful view of the full moon shining over them.

It took a moment for Mike to realise that El was stood back staring at him, longing and hesitation at war in her eyes. "Are you sure you want to do this? All of it?" she asked him in a whisper even though they were quite alone.

Mike smiled at her softly as he closed the distance between them. He just looked at her for a moment, doing nothing but holding her gaze, wanting her to see the determination and reassurance within his eyes. She seemed to see it as if it was a flame flickering in front of her, but she still needed the comfort of his words.

He moved a gentle hand to her waist, his palm warm against her soft white dress, while his other hand moved up to cup her cheek. A warm grin started to spread on his lips as he stared at her, "yes El. I

want to do it, *all* of it. I want to be with you, in every way. I *love* you."

El gasped in relief, her eyes flooding with light and her perfect lips curving into an exhilarated smile. "I love you too Mike," she whispered as his heart leaped with happiness. "I love you more than anything. And I respect your choices. If you want to be a vampire, I will make it happen." She took a purposeful step closer to him, their chest brushing as she bit her lip making Mike's heart practically jump out of his chest.

A seductive grin was playing on her lips as she ran her hands slowly up his stomach, to his chest and then across his shoulders. She leaned up, her body arching against Mike's and making his groan as her lips ghosted over his. She carefully removed his devil horns and then her halo. He was sure he was trembling as he stayed captivated by her stare. "And if you want my *body*...you can take that too."

"I want your body," Mike choked out, his voice husky and low as his pupils dilated with animalistic desire. "Do you want my body?" he asked in a rumbling whisper, his lips now touching El's, both of their eyes tightly closed as they breathed each other in, their chests panting together.

"Yes," El gasped, her voice laced with sin and lust. "I want every part of you Mike. Forever."

"It's yours." He whispered back to her, their stuttered breaths swirling together and tickling their hypersensitive skin. His throat was dry, and his head was dizzy with the intoxicating passion that begged for release.

In that moment instinct took over and Mike couldn't take the tension a second longer. He hoisted her body up so her legs wrapped around his waist and her arms flung around his neck, kissing him frantically as he pushed her up against the wall and ambushed her with needy kisses all over her jaw line and down her neck. She flipped her head back and moaned, the noise making all the blood in Mike's body to rush to his groin.

In desperation Mike couldn't stop himself from grinding against El



and gasping at the sensation with her. It was overpowering, it was hot, and it was everything he needed in that moment.

El whimpered in between their hungry kisses, their tongues stroking passionately and their breath hitching as they shared hot sharp breaths. Mike pulled away from the wall, his knees finding the edge of the bed as they tumbled onto the mattress, chuckling playfully when they landed awkwardly. But the moment Mike climbed up El's quivering body, the fire was instantly reignited.

Her legs wrapped around his hips, drawing him closer to her as they mercilessly bumped and grinded together, both exhaling sharply from the utter pleasure and gratification it brought. Mike could feel himself shaking from how badly he needed her, his erection already rock-hard at the feel of her body against his own.

He felt El's hands move from his back and reach for his shirt, her nimble fingers undoing each button as they ravished each other with their mouths. Before Mike could even think straight, his shirt was being pushed off his broad shoulders and he wriggled free of the black material.

Mike's hungry eyes looked down at El's body, licking his lips and panting in unison with her as he gazed at the beauty trapped under his hard body.

"Mike," El gasped making his heavily lidded eyes meet her dark red orbs. "Take my dress off."

He gulped suddenly feeling shy and nervous, but it didn't stop his hands from taking action as he leaned back enough to snag at the hem of the white dress, rolling it up El's body and carefully extracting it from her.

His eyes were heavy with want as he stared at her body, almost naked except for the white lace panties and bra. "You...are so beautiful." He choked out, not able to barely breathe or understand how he got to be the lucky one who got to call El *his*.

Mike shivered as El's finger nails raked across his chest and down his abdomen, her eyes hungry and her fangs just visible through the

slight part of her swollen lips. "You're perfect," she whispered as their eyes met once more. A look of love being shared between the two of them in that intimate moment.

El's cold hands moved to Mike's flushed cheeks and she brought his face down to hers, their lips meeting in a lingering breathy kiss, their lips tugging at each other, whimpers of desire leaving their mouths as Mike moved against El, their hips locked as they got some much needed friction.

"I want you so much," El moaned breathlessly against Mike's lips making him grunt with pleasure as he grinded down on her. "I've wanted you from the moment I saw you, but I've needed you for as long as my soul has lived."

Mike gasped against her lips, his breath hot, his scent making El twitch with need. The way she was trying to control her animalistic urges was incredibly arousing. "I need you too," he whispered before rolling El's bottom lip in between his teeth, eliciting a deliciously whimper from her. "Fuck, I love you so much."

"I love you too. I'm so in love with you Mike," El choked out, soft moans falling from her lips as Mike continued to rub against her while she dug her nails into his shoulders and made him groan deeply.

Her hands smoothed down his back, tracing his spine and making Mike shiver against her, pleasure absolutely boiling just beneath his skin. He gasped in utter animalistic need when El's grabbed his butt and pulled him even harder against her. Mike closed his eyes tight and resting his forehead against El's.

Her fingers had moved to the front of his black slacks and he groaned loudly when she cupped his hard and throbbing erection that had tented the material. She smiled mischievously against his lips and hurried to unbutton the pants and tug down the zipper. She used both hands to roughly push down the slacks and Mike hurried to help, kicking them off his legs until they disappeared onto the floor, leaving them both in their underwear.

Mike gasped as El suddenly flipped them over and straddled his hips

making his erection brush against her core, causing them to both groan loudly. Mike grabbed onto her hips and moved them against his own, the pleasure increasing to boiling point.

"God, *El*," Mike grunted, closing his eyes tight for a moment as he clenched his teeth, trying not to explode then and there.

El's hands moved up his stomach and planted onto his chest, her fingers gripping the skin slightly as she tossed her head back and enjoyed the feeling of them rubbing against one another.

She finally leaned down and began planting kisses across his skin, whispering, "all *mine*," causing Mike to shudder from the fire fit to burst in his body. The adrenaline rush was unlike anything he had ever experienced, this moment just felt so incredibly intense.

"I'm all yours," Mike whispered, his head spinning and his body practically imploding with desire.

El smiled at him, dominance and love causing a phenomenal glint in her eyes. She sat again on his hips and moved her hands to her back, unclipping her bra and flinging it to the floor. Mike instinctively sat up, so their chests were almost touching.

His eyes went to her perfect breasts and he groaned deeply with desire. "You are so fucking hot," he breathed out.

Mike tentatively moved his hands down to touch them, cupping them in his hands and stroking her nipples with his thumbs. El gasped and moved her hands into his hair, her grip almost painful as she pulled his head to her chest.

Mike knew what she wanted and whilst groping one breast he leaned into the other, taking it in his mouth and sweeping his tongue across the nipple, her moans of pleasure spurring him on. He attacked her breasts with kisses, licks and nibbles until El was practically quivering with need.

---

"I want you...I want you *now*." El demanded as she gasped from the indulgence of Mike devouring her upper body. She felt him nod

breathlessly against her chest and she was flipped back over onto the mattress.

Mike kissed her with need as El's hands went back into his dark locks. She felt her primal instincts kicking in, her eyes completely dark red and her fangs sharp and ready as she gasped and trembled with desire. Dominance started to pound through her blood.

Mike's lips were suddenly on her neck and slowly moved down her body whilst El bit her lip watching him with hungry eyes. His tongue swept in between her breasts and down her flat toned stomach.

His dark eyes slowly looked up her body until they engaged with her heavily lidded eyes. El knew he was asking permission to take off her panties and she nodded quickly, *desperate* for him to really *touch* her, to deal with the burning need she had for him in her core.

Mike's fingers hooked into the white panties and he pulled them down her thighs and off her legs. El felt a thrill of passion rush through her like fire when she saw how Mike was looking at her naked body.

"You are stunning..." Mike murmured against her inner thigh as he started to plant a trail of kisses there. El gulped, her throat dry, her eyes wild with boiling lust. Her body bucked the moment Mike's tongue met her centre, causing a loud moan to escape from her throat.

El gripped Mike's hair tighter as he made her feel waves of pleasure again and again, his mouth and tongue dominating her centre.

El had always needed Mike, her soul calling for him from the moment she was born. But for four long months she had wanted him, *craved* him. And now her body was ecstatic and sensitive beyond belief. It didn't take long before the building heat in her gut made her body begin to twitch and gasp.

"Mike!" she couldn't help but moan over and over again until she was brought over the edge and her orgasm grasped hold of her. She shouted out in pleasure and tried to desperately snap her legs together, but Mike remained in between her thighs.

El took Mike's shoulder and pulled him up impatiently to her lips. Their mouths crashed together in a breathless kiss. "I love you, I love you so much." Mike panted against her mouth.

"I love you too. And I want you *right now*." El told him urgently, her eyes pleading with his, making the fire in his eyes rise to new levels.

Mike pushed himself up on his hands and with El's assistance, they pulled his boxers off and threw them to the floor. For a moment, they both stared at each other in their most intimate moment, panting for breath, desperate for one another.

El moved up onto the pillow slightly, her legs opening slightly as she bit her lip and watched Mike with longing. He smiled at her, so lovingly and soft. His eyes gentle and so beautiful El wanted to cry. Because how did she ever deserve him? And yet their souls belonged together, he was hers, and always would be. For all eternity.

His lips met hers immediately and they were thrown back into their needy passion for one another, the fire never extinguishes, always there to warm them over tender glances, or boil them with furious passionate in their most intimate moments.

Mike rubbed himself against her core and they both gasped into one another's mouth. El was so ready for this moment to happen, ready to be together *at last* with her soulmate.

Mike crawled up El's body, both of them panting with overwhelming need. El held onto his biceps as he slowly entered her, their eyes never leaving one another as they stared at the other's reaction when they became one.

"Urgh...you feel...so good." Mike grunted through his pleasure as he moved slowly at first, completely overwhelmed that they were making love for the first time.

El wrapped her legs around his hips, drawing him in deeper making them both shout out in desire. It was everything she had wanted it to be, intimate, sensual, so very passionate. But with the added sensation of her vampire hyperactive senses, she thought she might faint she felt so deliriously turned on.

"Faster," El gasped feeling the rhythm of their bodies and wanting more.

Mike immediately obliged and El moaned, her head burying deeper into the pillow at how amazing it felt. Their chests panting with one another, their skin pressed together and their hips moving senselessly.

El kissed Mike desperately as he deepened his thrusts, her gasps and cries being swallowed up by his mouth and tongue. "God I love you." He exhaled, his voice deep and seductive.

"I love you" El breathed out once his lips were moving to her neck as he simultaneously began to pound into her, making her cry out with satisfaction as her body clung onto Mike like there was no tomorrow.

As their bodies moved and the adrenaline raced through her blood, El felt herself once again become dominant and wanting to control the situation. She flipped them to Mike's surprise, he stared up at her through blown pupils as she straddled him and rolled her hips, making him flip his head back with pleasure.

El's hands clenched onto his chest as she started to move up and down, causing cries of desire to break out from them both. Her finger nails leaving scratches on his skin, beads of blood coming to the surface that she leaned down to lick at desperately while moaning.

She lifted her head, still moving her hips as her gaze found Mike's dark eyes. She could see the fire she felt for desperately for him being reflected in his eyes.

"El," Mike groaned gasping as he sweaty palms gripped at her hips, helping her to find the rhythm that had them both gasping and whimpering.

"You're mine forever Mike," El panted, her chest heaving as she rolled her hips and Mike bucked up against her desperately as he groaned and writhed against the pillow.

"Yours...forever," he replied breathlessly, his eyes glazed over with pure desire. "And your mine...for all...eternity."

El grinned through her euphoria, "I couldn't want anything more."

Mike sat up, El was still moving up and down but now it became *much* more intimate. Their bare chests pressed together panting frantically, their eyes never left one another except for when they were kissing desperately, and Mike's hands moved to El's hips again so they bounced together.

They moaned in unison as they brought each other closer to falling off the edge, their eyes locked in an intimate moment as they moved closer to their orgasm.

El smiled at him through the pleasure and bounced more frantically, Mike grunted in awe and his fingers dug into her hips.

He gasped finally closing his eyes, unable to take the building fire. El could feel her whole body quivering as it prepared her for her undoing.

Mike's hips jutted against hers as he pounded into her hard and that was finally it, her eyes slammed shut and her mouth fell open as her walls tightened around him. She cried out the only thing that mattered, "*Mike!*"

As her walls clenched around him, El could feel Mike's cock throbbing inside of her and he gasped, "*El!*" as his orgasm hit him and they both held tightly onto each other riding the wave together.

Mike collapsed back onto the bed in exhaustion with El still clinging to him. They both panted trying to get their breaths. El couldn't stop the huge grin appearing on her tired face as the endorphins rushed through her body.

"That was –"

"Incredible." Mike answered for her breathlessly.

He looked up at her with a loving and grateful smile before burying his face into her neck and kissing the skin delicately. "Did I tell you how much I love you?" he whispered teasingly.

El giggled and bit her lip, her arms wrapping around his neck and her

fingers stroking the messy hair at the back. "You may have mentioned it."

Mike grinned against her skin and peppered kisses up her neck, onto her jaw line and finally kissed her full on the mouth. El kissed him back tenderly, wanting her love to flow right into the embrace.

El lay with her cheek against Mike's chest, closing her eyes and listening to his heart beat, wanting to remember the rhythm forever, because soon it would only be a memory. Mike wrapped his arms around her bare back, his fingers brushing up and down her spine, causing goose bumps on her skin.

"El?" Mike whispered in a caress that she felt against her skin like being bathed in moonlight.

"Hmm?" El replied softly, her fingers now moving up and down Mike's ribcage, her hand lifting and falling with each breath he took.

"I'm ready."

El blinked and raised her head from Mike's chest, her brow creased in confusion until she saw the wide eyed wonderous look in her soulmate's eyes. She gasped quietly, her lips parting slightly.

"You're ready?" she repeated in a breathless voice, even though she knew exactly what he was referring to.

Mike set his jaw and nodded his head, "yes," he exhaled in a confident breath. "I'm ready to change. I'm ready for my new life, with you by my side." A warm smile spread on his lips, adoration filling his beautiful amber eyes as he stared deeply into El's eyes.

El gulped nervously but then smiled softly, wanting him to know she supported his decision. "Okay," she whispered in acceptance before taking a deep breath.

---

Mike sat against the headboard fidgeting with his hands while he watched El flitter around the room. He could tell she had nervous energy as she pulled on her panties and handed him his boxers, even though there was a playful grin on her face when she saw his



blushing reaction at being given his underwear.

He hurried to pull them on, wiggling slightly against the bed to push the tight cotton material and elastic waistband over his hip bones. Mike didn't bother to put on anymore clothes, and he was relieved when El did the same. Her body so incredibly stunning as Mike's eyes hungrily lingered over her exposed breasts, the toned lines of her stomach and those long legs that not long ago had been wrapped around his hips while they made love.

A happy and dopey smile stretched Mike's thoroughly kissed lips, a dreamy look in his eyes as he watched El move over to her radio. "What are you doing?" he laughed lightly, wondering if she was trying to stall his turning.

El looked at him over her shoulder, her bright hazel red eyes making him feel like he was housing humming birds in his stomach, their wings battering against his insides. She shrugged a dainty bare shoulder, "I thought a bit of music might relax us both."

Mike wanted to interject that he didn't *need* to relax, but he closed his mouth, knowing that she needed this. She needed to go through whatever internal process was making her so anxious, and Mike would be patient.

Soft music filled the room, classic old tunes that Mike recognised began to play. El took a deep breath, turning to him and making her way back over to the bed.

When it appeared like she was going to sit down next to him, Mike shook his head and reached out his hand for her. "Come here," he whispered softly.

El looked at him in surprise, her eyes wide and resembling those of a doe. She slowly placed her palm in Mike's and he closed his grip, tugging her forward until she was straddling him, their chests pressed together while they stared into each other's eyes.

"What's wrong?" he asked her tenderly, reaching out to push back a stray lock of curly hair, tucking it carefully behind her ear.

El bit her lower lip, her eyes a mystery of complex thoughts before she sighed softly, her cold breath brushing against Mike's lips. "Are you *sure*?" she whispered in a strained tone. "There's no going back..."

In response Mike's hands moved to El's cheeks and he leaned in, pressing their lips together delicately, savouring every lingering second that their mouths were connected. "There is no going back," he agreed in a murmur against her lips. "But there is nothing without you. I choose *you* El."

Mike's eyes were on El's as he watched a tear fall from her bottom lashes. But it wasn't from sadness, it was from the overwhelming love that he knew she felt for him. Because he felt it too, more than *anything*.

The music on the radio changed, a familiar and beautiful tune filling the air around them, as they continued to stare at each other for the moment.

*Wise men say only fools rush in*

*But I can't help falling in love with you*

El exhaled a deep breath and pulled back ever so slightly, Mike's hands moving down to encircle her waist.

"Are you ready?" she whispered.

*Shall I stay?*

*Would it be a sin*

*If I can't help falling in love with you*

Mike continued to stare into the astonishing hazel red eyes that had changed everything from the moment he had seen them in Mirkwood. She had changed his world, and he would never want it any other way.

"Yes," Mike answered breathlessly.

*Like a river flows surely to the sea*

*Darling so it goes*

*Some things are meant to be*

El stroked Mike's cheek, no words needing to be said as their love was shared between their eyes, their souls singing as they knew the moment was imminent, they would finally be together. In this life and the next.

Slowly El moved forward, her lips pressing soft kisses against Mike's jaw line and finally down to his neck.

He exhaled one more time, his arms tightly wrapped around El's waist, wanting her close *always*.

"I love you," El whispered against Mike's racing pulse, her nose nuzzling his skin while Mike tried to control his breathing.

"I love you too," he replied in a choked voice, meaning every word as he felt El's mouth open against his skin, felt the piercing sharpness...

And then *everything* was different.

His breath stuttered, El in his arms, his *life* in her hands as he looked out at the window, his amber eyes staring at the full moon as his orbs slowly started to turn red...

*Take my hand*

*Take my whole life too*

*For I can't help falling in love with you*

---

AN: Music used in this chapter was Elvis Presley 'Can't Help Falling In Love', The Police 'Every Breath You Take', 5 Seconds of Summer 'Youngblood' and Ne-Yo 'Beautiful Monster'.

I just want to thank you all so much for coming along this crazy journey with me! I wanted to do something different for Halloween and I am so grateful for every comment, favourite/kudos. You are all incredible, and it still amazes me every day how lucky I am to have readers like you!

Stay tuned for the epilogue!

## 5. When the Night Has Come

AN: YOU GUYS! It's only a YEAR late! But here it is! The Dark Side Epilogue :-D Thank you all so SO much for being so patient, I am extremely thankful to you all. This epilogue is dedicated to one of my best friend Leila, as this is her favourite story of mine! Thank you for always being there along the journey and for being such a great cheerleader :-)

Please enjoy this final section of The Dark Side :-)

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The Dark Side

Epilogue - When the Night Has Come

*When the night has come*

*and the land is dark.*

*And the moon is the only light we'll see.*

*No I won't be afraid, no I won't be afraid.*

*Just as long as you stand by me.*

His heartbeat was rapidly out of control. The muscle was fighting, it was struggling and screaming against the poison that was quickly enveloping it inside, to be forever frozen, a memory of the human life he once had.

El watched on, her breathing shallow as her red hazel eyes flickered over his body, watching the sheen of sweat over his paling skin. He was twitching and convulsing, and El prayed for it to be over soon. She hesitantly pressed her palms down on his cold shoulders to try and ease him still. "It's okay, I'm here," she whispered, hoping to have got through to him on some level.

But there was no getting through to him. Only he could go through this moment. The moment Mike Wheeler left his human life behind and became something else. A creature of the night, a *vampire*.

---

The pain was unlike anything Mike had experienced before. The poison rushed through his veins, burning and forever changing the body he had once known. He wanted to scream but he couldn't, he wished he could be unconscious but there was no sleeping.

He was in a state of being, not truly alive but not dead. At least not yet. The uneven and harsh pounds of his heart were immeasurable, as the muscle shuddered and slowly, *painfully* broke down. His gums felt as if they were on fire as the piercing sensation of new teeth, *sharp* teeth made themselves known.

He wanted it to end. No, he *needed* it to end.

The pain felt everlasting. And it seemed like the only thing keeping him from self-combustion was the gentle touch through all the agony. The cold palm on top of his twitching and sweating hand. The careful brush of a thumb against his rough skin.

What was left of his breath was now erratic. His chest heaving and dropping rapidly as his body struggled for air. The fire was consuming him, it was all too much. He couldn't think, he couldn't move, he couldn't breathe...

And then there was silence.

---

El watched Mike closely, her eyes wide with anticipation. She had left him where the transition had taken place, on the bed, Mike's back propped up on the pillows so he was sitting up. She straddled his lap, her chest practically against his as she waited, wanting to be as close as possible.

Her ears pricked, but not from a reaction to noise, instead from the deafening silence that fell across the room. El gasped a ghost breath and gulped anxiously as she watched Mike. His eyes remained closed but his nostrils flared slightly and his jaw twitched.

El slowly raised her hand to his cold cheek, brushing her fingers across his smooth skin. "Mike?" She whispered in a tender caress. "Can you hear me?"

A slight groan came from his dry throat and he reacted slightly to El's hand, brushing his cheek into the palm of her hand seeking comfort and reassurance.

"I'm..." he croaked out, his eyes still closed. "I'm..." He slowly rubbed his dry lips together, unable to form the words he needed. But El knew.

"You're hungry," she responded for him.

Mike slowly nodded, too weak to form any more words. El watched him, concern knitting across her forehead. Her eyes flickered to her wrist and she pursed her lips.

"Here," she whispered, moving her wrist underneath Mike's nose. Carefully rubbing against his skin and lips, allowing him to pick up her scent and realise what he truly needed in this moment. *Blood*.

His nose twitched and his lips slowly brushed against her wrist as a soft groan of desperation left his throat. El watched him intently, her eyes not leaving his face. She bit her lip in anticipation, her body feeling alive and alert as his lips slowly parted against her skin.

There was no need to explain to him what he needed to do; it was his primal instinct now.

His fangs, razor sharp, punctured into El's wrist and she gasped, enjoying the pain, feeling desire stirring in the pit of her stomach as she watched the love of her life drink her blood, his pale face a sharp contrast to the red that now tinged his lips.

"That's it," El whispered, her mouth dry, her pupils dilating as she watched Mike feed, "that what you want. It's yours. *I'm yours.*"

Mike's eyes opened sharply, capturing El's gaze as she gasped at the deep amber mixed with bright red, the power in his stare as she whimpered in pleasure at the tight hold of his mouth on her wrist. The sharp pain of his fangs and the tingling sensation of his lips sucking on her skin made El's ghost heart pound desperately.

She had never felt more alive.

El arched her spine and tilted her head back, her eyes closed and her mouth gaped open in desire, her senses screaming with animalistic want when suddenly her wrist was released and she instantly felt the sharp pleasure of Mike sinking his fangs into her neck, using his new found strength to flip them over so that El landed against the soft blankets.

She gasped as Mike sucked, licked and bit at her neck, her fingers getting lost in his dark hair, pulling and tugging at the strands, the locks being the only thing keeping her grounded. She felt overwhelmed in the best way, Mike's strong body keeping her pinned down, feeling him everywhere made her skin tingle.

"I love you," he groaned against her bloodied neck, his voice deep and heavy with lust. His nose brushed against her skin, she could feel his sharp inhales and exhales and it only made the fire in her belly rise, the flames licking at her insides just as Mike's tongue stroked up and down the arch of her neck.

El's moved her hands from Mike's messy hair, her fingernails scraping down his cheeks as she cupped his face and pulled him from her neck, bringing his forehead to hers. She gasped, her phantom breaths making her chest heave with adrenaline and need.

"And I love you, *forever*." She whispered, her eyes searching Mike's, seeing that the sweet and gentle man that she had fallen in love with was still there.

He stared back at her, his icy breath tickled her face, his lips were tinged with her blood, some of it had smeared on his cheeks, and yet he was *beautiful*.

"Forever," he promised, the strength of his gaze making El feel choked. It had all been worth it, he was here now. And he would never leave.

Mike lowered himself over El so that their lips were merely a breath apart, their eyes never left one another as they stared, allowing the passion between them to build. El didn't know how long they stayed like that, locked in a moment before their lips brushed together, their eyes closed and they kissed like they never had before.

There was no constraints, no fear, just the overwhelming love and lust that they felt for one another.

El's hands immediately went back into Mike's hair, guiding their movements, her fingers arched and dug into the locks, pulling slightly as she controlled their kiss. Mike groaned and gasped into her mouth, his tongue stroking her own, their lips harsh and urgent.

His right hand pressed into the mattress keeping him above El, while his left hand, cold to touch but hot to El's swirling need, moved down from her cheek, his finger tips brushing against her jawline before teasing her neck.

Their lips remained in a fiery lock of passion, their ghost breaths and pants swirling together like a building flame while Mike's hand moved further down El's body, moving over her breasts. She only wore a white dress and he could feel how aroused she was already, his fingers brushing delicately over her quivering chest. The sensation sent shots of electricity down her body, straight to the pit of her stomach. Straight to where she ached desperately for him.

Her whimpers in his mouth made Mike smile, she could feel it in the way his lips curved over her own. His confidence only made him more attractive and El kissed him back more ferociously, wanting to be completely consumed by him.

The way Mike's fingers moved down her stomach made El's ghost heart so erratic it could have brought her back to life. His movements were soft, barely touching her cold shaky skin, and yet every brush of his finger tips made El feel delirious with longing. She wanted more, she wanted to be pushed over the edge and she wanted Mike to do it.

El broke their kiss, only allowing Mike a second of confusion before she pulled his neck down and stroked his cold skin with her tongue, delicate and slow, so slow she could feel him shaking with anticipation. Her nose brushed softly against the mark she had made turning him. Ever so gently she kissed it, breathing him in and closing her eyes. Her left hand cupped and arched Mike's face, stroking his skin while she nestled her head into his neck.

His scent still drove her wild, her skin tingled with desire, *desperate*



to be touched all over. And in time she knew it would get its wish, but they had eternity. They had every lifetime, every moment *together*.

El felt the lump build in her throat and she swallowed, trying to not become overwhelmed with the reality of what had happened. Of what Mike had sacrificed to be here with her. He had chosen her over life itself. How could she ever be worthy of that sacrifice?

"Hey," Mike whispered, pulling back enough to be able to look down at El. She averted her eyes, still staring at his neck, at where she had marked him. "What's wrong?"

She gulped, blinking rapidly to try and avoid the well up of water that started to prick at the corner of her eyes.

Noticing her demeanour, Mike carefully pulled himself off El and instead settled down next to her. He propped himself up by his elbow and reached for his mate, El allowing him to pull her closer, his arm draping over her abdomen. She felt safe in his hold, her hands covering his arm and stroking his skin as she finally relented, looking up at Mike, hating the concern in his beautiful face, the way his brow was frowned and his amber red eyes searched her expression.

"I never truly said *thank you*," El explained, her eyes vulnerable and her chest tight with emotion and suppressed feelings. "You...you *chose* me Mike. You could have had such a different life, but you chose *me*."

Mike's eyes had become wide at her revelation as if he had not been expecting it. However it wasn't long before his gaze softened and a sweet smile curved his lips. In those moments it was difficult to remember that he was a blood thirsty vampire. That he could kill someone as easily as breathing.

No, he was just the wonderful and brave Mike Wheeler that El had met in the woods. He was her soulmate, no matter what form they took.

Mike reached a hand up to El and slowly stroked her hair, his eyes staying on El's as his fingers carefully brushed through her thick brunette waves. It was such a comforting sensation that she felt as if

she could drown in the warmth of his eyes.

"You don't have to thank me," Mike whispered, looking intently at his soulmate. "We were made for each other, I would follow you anywhere. Into every life we are meant to lead, into any dimension or world. You are mine, and I'm *never* going to leave your side."

A tear fell down El's cheek, her lashes unable to contain her emotion any more. She gasped and pulled Mike closer, her arms going around his body as they embraced, sinking into one another's hold, where they both felt most complete. Being held by Mike was one of the most incredible feelings in the world, his arms around her represented warmth, comfort, safety and *home*.

Their lips met and this time there was no more interruptions. Their passion was allowed to be released, El pulled Mike on top of her, her fingers unbuttoning his pants as their mouths moved together, hungry and filled with need.

El's dress joined Mike's clothes on the floor and she sunk back into the bed, arching her back and gasping in pleasure as her lover moved his way down her body, worshipping her, his mouth making her skin feel like it was boiling hot with the pleasure he gave her. She urged him on and moaned softly as he gave her passion like she had never experience before.

El rolled them over, her mouth hungry and urgent as she attacked Mike's skin, his deep and heavy groans only spurring her on. She nibbled at his skin, her tongue pressing against his blood, *her* blood. They were one now, their blood mingled as one, they had become mates. No one else would have them.

El straddled Mike, his fingers digging into her hips as they moved together, passion in every move, desire swirling and building in their body, that fire growing, consuming everything until all they could see was stars.

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A rumble of thunder awoke Mike from his clouded dreams. He didn't remember much and what he did remember he wasn't sure he could believe. El's body against his, her mouth on his neck, her razor sharp

teeth breaking into his skin, his life forever changed.

There was another sound, this time of the door being slowly opened and on instinct Mike opened his eyes, finding El immediately. She was already looking at him and he felt his cold breath stutter. It wasn't a dream, everything that he had experienced was *real*.

He was like her now, a vampire. And they would spend all of eternity *together*.

And as Mike took El in, her curly waves plaited into a side braid, dressed in a pink sweater and tight blue jeans, he knew it had all been worth. And for the smile she gave him, that smile of happiness, that twinkle in her sparkling hazel eyes; yes, every second of this new existence was worth it.

Mike felt a smile stretch his lips and his stomach flipped as he stared at the woman he loved.

"Hi," she grinned, her voice breathy. "Did I wake you?"

Mike shook his head, sitting up in the process as El walked over to the bed and sat beside him. "No," he grinned, pulling her closer, a mischievous glint in his eyes. "But I'm glad you're here."

El's giggle was covered up by Mike's lips as he reached for his partner. She sighed happily, her arms wrapping around his neck as he tugged her closer, both of them laughing as she ended up on his knee. Their mouths moving together, their kisses becoming deeper and longer, a tension building up between them, fiery and exhilarating.

Before Mike could do any more then move his hand up El's leg, she pulled away from his lips, giggling, her beautiful face happier than he had ever seen it. "We've got plenty of time to do that," she teased, laughter in her voice as she placed her palm against Mike's bare chest, moving her fingers up and down his skin, causing goosebumps to erupt to the surface of his body.

El sighed, light and free, her eyes mystical as she stared at Mike. "The others are waiting to see you."

Mike's eyebrows raised in surprise, "what? They're here?"

El laughed, rolling her eyes in amusement. "They live here remember?"

Mike grinned, wrapping his arms around El and pulling her closer, making her squeal in surprise before smiling bashfully as her mate kissed her cheek, nuzzling her ear with his nose. "I was a bit too immersed in everything we've been doing to remember," he admitted, smiling against her ear, his grin only widening at the way she shuddered under his touch.

El had closed her eyes, biting her lower lip to try and control her desire. She took a phantom breath, deep and calming as she looked at Mike, making butterflies flutter in his stomach. She was breathtakingly beautiful.

"I kind of forgot everything else too," she admitted, her smile coy, captivating Mike's attention. She exhaled loudly, clearly trying to remember her purpose for the conversation. "But they're in the living room, *impatiently* waiting your arrival."

"I feel like a celebrity," Mike teased making El laugh. He watched her for a moment, accepting that they wouldn't be going back to bed *just* yet, and resigned himself to finding his clothes and getting dressed.

He smiled teasingly as El propped herself on the bed and watched him, her smirk so mischievous and so *tempting* that Mike had to stop himself from joining her, making her gasp and moan like he had all night. He had never known an attraction like it, and if it were even possible, it only seemed to have exemplified now he was a vampire.

He could smell her scent stronger than before and he would happily drown in it. He didn't have to be fragile with her and nor did she. They were closer than ever, completely able to bare their souls to one another. Mike had always known something in his life was missing, and here she was. The person he was *destined* to meet. The girl who had quite literally taken his breath away. The girl who now held out her hand to him as he nervously edged towards the bedroom door, ready to see his friends but nervous as to what they would think of his vampire form.

"It's going to be okay," El whispered, her fingers laced with his, the

gentle squeeze of her hand calming him better than any medicine ever could.

Mike exhaled a deep breath through his nose, unable to stop the pattern he had created since the day he was born. He knew that the air would do nothing to his frozen lungs, but he preferred the rhythm. It almost soothed him and stopped him hyperventilating at the reality of what he was now.

El led Mike down the corridor towards the living room, he felt his nerves already starting to slip away at the sounds of his best friends, laughing and taunting each other just like it were any normal day. He could tell Will and Lucas were arguing about D&D while Max muttered how stupid they were being, Dustin seemed to be talking to someone else, a female voice that Mike wasn't familiar with.

He was surprised by how much he *could* hear, and absentmindedly brushed the fingers of his left hand against his ear, wondering if this was some kind of effect from the vampiric life he now led.

"I hear footsteps," said an almost gleeful Dustin, abruptly stopping the debate between Will and Lucas.

Some of the nerves edged back into Mike's stomach and he swallowed anxiously. He wasn't sure what he expected to happen when he saw his best friends, but he almost felt that high school sense of acceptance again. He wanted to be liked, he wanted to be accepted into their group.

El squeezed Mike's hand, bringing him to a stop, his long feet making him stumble slightly. He wanted to roll his eyes, because of course his general awkwardness hadn't left him even when he became a vampire.

El soon distracted him from his body's ailments with her dazzling smile. He could sense her excitement, could see the light flickering away in her beautiful eyes. Her enthusiasm worked like a soothing balm to his anxiety, and within seconds Mike felt calmer.

"Are you ready?" she asked him, her voice sweet with a trill of excitement.

Mike grinned, a breathy laugh coming out of his mouth. "Ready."

"You know we can hear you right?" came Dustin's voice, causing the couple to snort with amusement, El gave in and pushed open the door, exposing the living room and the five vampires waiting for them.

Mike walked in slowly, El's hand held tightly in his grasp, her hold keeping him anchored as he looked around at his friends and a new addition. It was the girl that Dustin had been dancing with the night before. Laura was it? Mike could only assume their night had gone well considering she was wearing Dustin's dressing gown.

His amber red eyes flickered around to his friends, trying to gauge their reactions at his turning. There was silence for a moment before Will blinked looking at Mike before turning to Lucas and Dustin.

"Is it just me, or has he not changed a bit?"

Lucas snorted, "except for the eyes."

"He was always that pale," Dustin added, a teasing grin on his face, his arm draped around Laura who was watching on with interest. Clearly she had been filled in on the situation.

"Sorry Wheeler, but the boys say there has been no drastic change," Max said from where she lounged on Lucas's knee.

"Should I be disappointed?" Mike questioned, looking between El who laughed shaking her head and to his friends who smiled. Before Dustin could do more than open his mouth to make a playful comment, there was a loud and distinctive knock.

The group all in unison looked towards the cabin door, a relaxed look on their faces which didn't suit the way El tensed up next to Mike. Her shoulders raised and her jaw tightened as she stared at the door for a moment.

"What's wrong?" Mike whispered to her, his brow creasing with worry, his stomach twisting uncomfortably. Images of stereotypical vampire hunters entering his imaginative mind.

El sighed, her shoulders lowering as she slowly released Mike's hand and walked towards the front door. She looked at him over her shoulder, an expression on her face that he found difficult to read. It was like a combination of nerves and calm all at once. It didn't make sense.

"It's Hop," El said, biting her lip as she stared at a confused Mike. "My dad."

Mike opened his mouth to ask the many questions on the tip of his tongue as El turned back to the door and it opened, the locks all unpicking as they were slid across the metal, as if an invisible hand had moved them. Had El just done that with her mind? Mike had a million questions to ask, and despite the situation he couldn't help but feel relieved that he would have all of eternity to get to know El. He wanted to know absolutely *everything* about her. What was important to her, was important to him. What hurt her, hurt him and what she loved, he loved too.

"Well it's about time," came a gruff voice that Mike didn't recognize. It belonged to a tall and broad man who looked like he could take on a bear and win. Mike shuffled slightly, backing up against the wall, feeling suddenly awkward. What didn't help matters was that Mike could hear a heart beating, he could hear blood rushing and it could only be coming from this man, the man that El said was her dad.

Yes he didn't exactly smell *nice*, but there was still that *sound*. That sound that drew Mike and all the other vampires in, that need to feed that was always there, laying just under the surface like the fangs that hid in his gums.

"Feel free to give me a hand with this," El's dad grumbled as he dragged a large dead deer into the cabin. Mike's eyes widened as he looked at the animal. He had never seen a deer this close, and now it appeared that he would be eating the animal.

Dustin hurried forward to help, looking like the perfect gentleman although Mike could tell by the excited look on his friend's face that he was just plain hungry. He would do anything for his food, no matter what lives they led.

"Thanks dad," El smiled looking at the man intently, appreciation in her smile. He helped Dustin lift the animal onto the table and then turned back to El, his face softened and he put his arm around her shoulders, giving her frame a comforting squeeze.

"Well I can't have you eating me can I," he grinned, making El's smile curve further as the other vampires snickered, their attention being drawn to the animal on the table. Dustin was already biting off a limb to share with Laura who bounced with excitement at getting a proper meal.

El hugged her dad in thanks and caught Mike's gaze from over his shoulder. He had stayed back, unsure how to proceed with the dead animal on the table, but more importantly with El's father. She seemed to understand this immediately, and slowly pulled back to steer her dad around so that he spotted Mike.

His eyes widened in surprise before El hurriedly cut in, "this is Mike. Mike Wh - "

"Wheeler?" the man interrupted looking between El in shock and then the young man who shuffled awkwardly against the doorframe, trying to avert his red amber eyes. "As in Karen and Ted Wheeler's son?"

Mike gulped and slowly looked back up at the man who clearly knew who he was and where he had come from. "Have they been looking for me?" he asked, nervous of what he might hear.

It was the man's turn to look uncomfortable, "well, not exactly. You haven't been reported missing or anything...but I know of your family. Well established, plenty of money." He turned his gaze from Mike sharply to El. "My question is, what is he doing here? And *who* turned him into a vampire?"

"I did," El whispered, not able to meet her father's strong stare.

"It was my choice," Mike added in, pushing himself from the wall and moving to be beside El where they put their arms around one another. They were a united front and no one, not even El's dad could break them up. Mike would defend his love and his decision for all of



eternity, it had been the right thing to do. He was with the woman he loved now and life, whatever *life* was, finally made sense.

The man looked between Mike and El, clearly seeing the connection and the determination in their eyes. His gaze softened slightly but his jaw clenched. "No more," he said, not just looking at the couple but at the rest of the party who were watching the scene unfold while chewing on ripped off pieces of the animal.

"You already have my word that I won't turn another human," Max said, her words were heavy and serious. It was clearly a strong conversation that she had with the man, one that couldn't be forgotten, perhaps one that had changed her way of thinking forever.

"And you have my word too," El spoke up, tightening her arms around Mike. She looked at her partner, their eyes meeting, their smiles lifting their cheeks. "I love him," she said gently, her gaze still on Mike while Hopper sighed.

"Christ," he muttered, pinching the bridge of his nose.

"And I love her," Mike said, his eyes now on El's father. Wanting him to know how serious he was. "I want to be with her for the rest of my life, no matter how long or short that is. I'll make her happy sir, I promise."

El beamed, her eyes sparkling as she looked between her mate and her dad. Her father watched her for a moment, picking up on how much lighter she appeared, like she had welcomed in happiness and shunned the negativity and sorrow she had felt when she was turned.

He exhaled a deep breath giving in and extended a hand out to Mike. "You better look after my little girl."

Mike smiled, relief easing his tight chest as he quickly received the handshake. "I always will sir."

"And none of that *sir* crap, it's Hopper okay?"

"Okay," Mike said breathlessly, nodding his head and trying not to show the nerves he felt. "Thank you Hopper."

They were still shaking hands as Hopper tightened his grip, making Mike look between his squished hand and El's bear like father. "And remember, you might be a scary ass vampire now, but I can still kick your ass if needed. Understand?"

Mike opened his mouth to speak, confusion at the turn of events taking him by surprise.

"Nod if you understand!" Hopper repeated, his voice louder and his grip even more bone breaking.

Mike hurried to nod, thankful that he couldn't turn red from embarrassment. Hopper finally released his crushed hand and Mike carefully withdrew it, not wanting an already grinning Lucas and Dustin to tease him. So much for being an all powerful vampire, Hopper was *definitely* much more terrifying.

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"So Hopper is interesting," Mike said casually as El led him out of the cabin. She laughed, looking back at him over her shoulder, amusement sparkling her eyes.

It had been a few hours since Hopper had left, leaving the vampires to feast on the animal he had brought them. It had been Mike's first feast and had been a lot better than he had expected. Instinct took over and he knew where to bite the animal to get the richest blood was and the best chunks of meat. He was full, surprised by how his appetite could change so drastically. The food that had held such an appeal to Mike in his human life didn't even enter his mind now. All he craved was blood, if it were from an animal or the call of human blood. He knew it was all he would need to feast on to be satisfied.

"He's a really good guy," El replied, leading Mike towards the back of the cabin. "He took me in when I was young, he has been the best father I have ever known. And even after I became...*this*, he stuck by my side."

Mike listened to El's words but it took a moment for understanding to kick in. "Wait, he's not your biological father?"

El paused her pace and looked at Mike, her eyebrows raised in

surprise as if she didn't believe he couldn't know this crucial information about her. "He isn't my *biological* father, no." She shook her head, smiling sadly. "I didn't know my biological parents, they died when I was a baby. So Hop is all I've known. Well, except for..."

"Except for?" Mike couldn't help but ask, his curiosity getting the better of him. El looked tense again, although this time there was a glint of anger in her eyes, it made the redness only deepen. It made her look more predatory.

El turned her gaze away from Mike and looked towards the woods, her shoulders relaxing slightly as she took a deep breath. "I think we should sit down," she concluded, confusing Mike as she pulled him along. He didn't say a word though, knowing that she had a story to tell. One that was clearly serious and important to her.

The forest floor was still too wet from the morning storm to sit on the moist earth, so Mike pointed out a thick tree log that had clearly broken down from lightning, the splintered end of the wood looked haunting and something you would expect to see in a horror movie. But there was something peaceful about these woods, perhaps it was because of the people that lived in them. Enemy to many, but to Mike they were his family now.

The young couple settled on the wood, shuffling slightly to get comfy, their hands remaining together, their fingers laced creating one perfect unit. Mike lifted their joined hands to his mouth and delicately brushed his lips against El's skin, making her smile softly, her beautiful eyes watching him closely as he kissed the back of her hand, wanting her to know that no matter what she had to say he wasn't going anywhere. They were in this together now, *forever*.

"Forever," El whispered, making Mike blink in confusion, his lips paused in their motion as he looked at El, surprised by her words until it *finally* made sense.

"You can read my mind can't you?"

El grinned, a glint of mischievousness in her hazel red orbs. "Yes," she admitted, keeping up her playful front for a moment before her smile softened. "Your thoughts are beautiful. I've always loved them."

Mike wanted to blush, and in a way he felt like he was. He still felt that rush of nerves, those butterflies that fluttered madly in his stomach and that ghostly ache in his heart. And he knew that was a feeling that would never fade. Because you would never forget falling in love, it was the most powerful feeling on the earth and not even death could end it.

"Can you turn off my thoughts?" Mike teased. "Like what about when I'm thinking of boring things. Like the weather or um, what I had for dinner last night."

El giggled, shaking her head playfully. "*Nothing* you think about is boring."

"What about if I think of algebra or something?"

"Okay...maybe a *little* boring."

Mike grinned almost feeling like he had accomplished something.

"No you didn't win this argument. And *no*, it wasn't an argument in the first place!" El said exasperatedly answering Mike's thoughts and making them both laugh.

For a while they sat there peacefully, Mike pulling El into an embrace where she nestled into his hold. They both listened to the sounds of the forest, it was so amplified now. The rustle of a branch, the tweets and songs of birds, the hopping of a rabbit. Mike knew that his heightened senses were certainly going to be something to get used to, but in the moment he could only feel what it felt like to hold El in his arms, and it was heaven.

"You're so cheesy," she whispered.

"And you're beautiful," Mike retorted, smiling to himself when he felt El's cheek curve against his shirt, just *knowing* that she was grinning bashfully right now. His arms tightened around her, wanting to keep her safe forever while his fingers played with the ends of her wavy hair, the softness of a curl so delicate against his skin.

"I was brought up in a lab," El whispered sometime later, surprising Mike who had been resting his cheek against her head.

He slowly lifted his head giving El some room to move so they could look at one another. She looked nervous, *vulnerable*. Seeing that type of fear inside the eyes of the woman he loved was the worst thing Mike had ever seen.

"Even before I was turned into a vampire I have had telekinetic abilities," El explained her eyes flickering over Mike's face trying to see his reaction before she continued on. "I don't know when they started, but I think since birth. That's...that's why my biological parents aren't here anymore. They were killed."

Mike knew that if he had any colour in his face this would have been the moment that it drained out.

"A man called Dr Martin Brenner ran experiments on people at the Hawkins lab. I was number eleven. I still have the mark," El whispered, her voice full of shame as she pulled back her sleeve and exposed to Mike the small tattoo that marked her wrist.

011.

He was amazed that he hadn't seen it earlier, especially because they had been intimate. But when he had fed from El's wrist, he didn't think he could have said his own name. The moment had been so paralysing and completely consumed all other thoughts except for the need to feed.

Mike carefully wrapped his fingers around El's wrist, bringing it closer, his eyes intent as he looked at the tattoo once more.

"They did experiments on me and on other children. They tried to use me as a weapon," El said in a harsh tone, her anger still evident. Mike could practically feel the fury that surrounded her.

"How did you get out? How did you manage?" Mike asked, captivated by El and unnerved by what she had gone through.

El blinked, some of the anger dissipating as she turned to look at Mike. "Hop," she said simply, a softer smile now curving her lips. "I escaped into the woods and he found me. He gave me a home with him and became the father that I never had. He got the lab closed

down, he has contacts who helped him expose the lab without giving up my identity."

"I think it's obvious how much he loves you El," Mike couldn't help but say, smiling despite the situation when El looked at him with a sweet and hopeful look of a young girl. A young girl who had been ripped from her true parents and given a second chance.

Mike flexed out his fingers and grinned, "and I can tell how protective he is over you from how he almost broke my fingers. Hey, maybe if I was still human he would have succeeded!"

El laughed, grinning as she grabbed Mike's hand and kissed it. "I wouldn't have let him," she exhaled, kissing each finger, the movement making his throat feel dry. He watched her intently, completely overwhelmed by the fact that she was his. And the way she slowly looked up at him through thick eyelashes and smirked didn't help matters.

"What happened to Brenner?" Mike asked, unable to drop the topic. He needed to know where the monster that had tormented his love was. Perhaps he might not have been able to do much in his human form, but things were different now.

El seemed to pick up once more on his thoughts and sighed softly, "Mike, you don't need to do anything. I already dealt with him."

"Oh," Mike gulped, torn between being disappointed that he couldn't have done more, but also not at all surprised that El, being her strong and powerful self had made Brenner pay.

A bitter smile curved on El's lips, "and I wish I could kill him all over again. I hoped it would help. I still don't *feel* like I have - "

"Closure?"

"Yeah..."

Mike poised his lips thoughtfully, watching El who had dipped her head almost as if she were ashamed. He exhaled a deep breath and brushed his fingers under El's chin, making her slowly lift her face so that their eyes could capture one another in a soft gaze.

"Closure isn't always violence," Mike said, smiling gently. "You know you can talk to me right? We have *literally* the rest of our lives. And I'm going to be here for you, every single step of it. I want to know everything, okay? When ever you're ready I'll be here."

El looked at Mike almost as if she was captivated. She shook her head slightly, her eyes wide and her lips parted. "How are you real?" she whispered. "How can someone be so *perfect*?"

"Does a vampire count as being real?" Mike grinned, making El break through her awe and laugh. Mike ran a hand through his messy dark hair, feeling almost nervous as he spoke. "And I don't know about *perfect*. But I know I'm perfect *for* you. Because El, you're perfect for *me*."

El exhaled a shaky breath and reached for Mike, her hands going to his cold cheeks and pulling him the short distance to her lips. They closed their eyes and sank deeply into their kiss, emotions so high in the air that Mike could feel El's tears against his skin.

"I love you," she whispered in between kisses, her mouth moving from his lips, to his jaw line. "I love you so much."

Mike opened his eyes, knowing they were more red than ever, rich with desire and passion. He brought El's lips back to his own, his fingers getting lost in her hair. He tugged on her lower lip with his teeth and captured her mouth as she moaned sweetly. He didn't know how long they kissed for, time didn't seem to exist anymore.

Slowly Mike pulled back, resting his forehead against El's and looking into her eyes, feeling his heart properly for the first time since his human life had ended. It was full, it was full of so much love for the woman in his arms. The woman who was now bathed in moonlight.

"And I love you, so so much. And I always will El. Through this lifetime, and every lifetime."

"Forever," El promised.

Mike grinned, a tear running down his cheek. She was worth it. She always had been and she *always* would be.

"Forever," Mike whispered, pulling El back to his lips, holding her in his arms. Knowing that however long eternity would last he would always belong to someone, he would always be loved and love, he would always have a home. Because she was right here. The beautiful, telekinetic vampire, bathed in the light of the moon. Forever young. Forever his.

*The End.*

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AN: Thank you so much for reading! And thank you for coming along The Dark Side journey with me :) I have more outlets to share my journey with you all but this site makes it VERY hard to post them as they are seen as advertising. But if you go to my Insta you may find the link there!

HAPPY HALLOWEEN EVERYONE!